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NOTES AND COMMENTS

OCTOBER, 1921

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Radium and Manvantaras

LEADERS of modern scientific thought have already declared that the conception of Matter and Force reached by the study of radioactivity, the view that all chemical elements are built up of intensely active electrical particles, provides a meeting ground for science and theology. The thought is that we have attained to a conception of Substance which is at once Matter and Spirit, a form of Being of which Spirit or energy is the one pole, while Matter is the other.

It is of high interest to find that, resolutely pushing forward the investigation of radioactivity in another direction, and pondering over the results with the scientific imagination, leaders of science have tentatively reached certain views concerning the larger processes of world-life which are to be found in essence, and even worked out in some detail, in the religious philosophy of the older scriptures, inspired by the Eastern Wisdom.

An example of this broader and deeper use of the scientific imagination may be found in Professor Frederick Soddy's able work, *The Interpretation of Radium* (already referred to in earlier "Notes and Comments"), the Preface of which is dated July, 1920.

The way in which these imaginative, and, as we think, deeply intuitive speculations came into being, is also profoundly interesting. The main substance of the book is made up of lectures delivered by Professor Soddy, beginning as long as seventeen years ago, while the book finally left the author's hands only last year. The process suggested by the composite, though well digested result, is this: It would seem as though Professor Soddy, after he had spent many years in actual laboratory work, and had summed up the concrete results, with illustrative experiments, in the various series of lectures; after he had "liberated his soul" in giving birth to these more tangible things,—had allowed his soul to have its own way, to ponder and brood, to perform concentrated meditation, as Patanjali would say, upon this whole mass of wonderful material, and that,

as the fruit of this finer, secondary process, he had brought forth the cosmic speculations which we are about to consider, and had included this intuitive harvest in the completed book published a few months ago.

That the process of pondering and meditation was not complete, that it lacked one vital element on which Patanjali would have insisted, an element characteristic of the Eastern Wisdom,—we shall try to show a little later, after we have considered the main speculations put forward by Professor Soddy and their marked Oriental colouring.

After summing up the earlier scientific view of a universe running down, like a clock once wound up; a universe, therefore, doomed to eventual inertia and deadness, as illustrated by the popular speculations concerning the cooling and death of the sun, preceded by the chilling of the earth and the consequent extinction of all life, Professor Soddy speaks of the more recent conception of a continuing process which includes not only the degradation, but also the regeneration of energy, a conception largely drawn from our knowledge of radium and its congeners:

"Into the arena of these silent world-creating and destroying influences has entered a new-comer—'Radioactivity'—and it has not required long before it has come to be recognized that in the discovery of radioactivity, or rather of the sub-atomic powers and processes of which radioactivity is merely the outward and visible manifestation, we have penetrated one of Nature's innermost secrets. Whether or no the processes of continuous atomic disintegration bulk largely in the scheme of cosmical evolution, at least it cannot be gainsaid that these processes are at once powerful enough and slow enough to furnish a sufficient and satisfactory explanation of the origin of those perennial outpourings of energy, by virtue of which the universe to-day is a going concern rather than a cold, lifeless collocation of extinct worlds."

While radium in substantial quantities has been found only in certain rare minerals, like the uranium ores, it has, nevertheless, been proved that radium and other radioactive elements, like thorium, are very generally diffused through the rocks of the earth's crust in minute amounts which make a considerable total, and may be supposed to produce very important results. To Lord Rayleigh (Professor Strutt) and Professor Joly we owe the determination of the presence and amount of radium in rocks gathered from many different points on the globe.

Professor Joly has also recorded much interesting work and speculation, in his book, *Radioactivity and Geology,* regarding the possibility of using these widely distributed radioactive elements as time-clocks for the world, and for the universe generally. Roughly stated, the principle is this. Radium shoots forth, from within its atoms, contained atoms of helium and electrons, as bullets are shot from a gun. This process of bombardment continues at a certain definite rate, a certain percentage of atoms firing within a given time. After a time which can be measured, the bombardment ceases. The bombardment periods differ enormously; in some of the radioactive substances they are

counted in fractions of a second; in others, in days or years; in others, as in radium itself, they extend over centuries; in yet others, like uranium, they last over billions of years, according to the accepted view. By firing off these helium and electric bullets, and thus losing weight, each radioactive element is degraded into an element of lower atomic weight. Finally, taking as a basis of calculation the amount of uranium which has not yet been degraded by this process of bombardment, in a given rock, compared with the amount of helium shot out, it is possible to establish a time-measure for that rock.

Speaking of the method thus very imperfectly outlined, Professor Joly says: "With an interest almost amounting to anxiety, geologists will watch the development of researches which may result in timing the strata and the phases of evolutionary advance; and may even—going still further back—give us reason to see in the discrepancy between denudative and radioactive methods, glimpses of past æons, beyond that day of regeneration which at once ushered in our era of life, and, for all that went before, was 'a sleep and a forgetting'" (page 250).

It is impossible not to feel the Oriental flavour of this. It may be brought out by quoting a few lines from one of the *Puranas,* the Indian "Books of Ancient Teaching": "When fire had perished from the earth, and this entire world, motionless and moving, had been dissolved into one mass, and had been destroyed—waters first came into being. As the world formed at that time but one ocean, nothing could be distinguished. The benign Evolving Power, Brahma, slept upon the water. But awaking because of the predominance of energy within Him, the Evolving Power moved upon the water, hither and thither, like a firefly at night in the season of the rains" (*Vayu Purana,* VI, 1-7).

Here are "glimpses of past æons", followed by "a sleep and a forgetting", with the beginning of the "day of regeneration which ushered in our era of life".

Taking passages, like that quoted, as his starting point, Professor Soddy allows his scientific imagination to consider the larger cosmic processes:

"Joly has had the courage to push the argument to its logical conclusion, and has supposed that the radioactive materials are not confined to a thin surface crust, but are equally distributed throughout the globe in much the same proportions as they are in the crust. If this is so, there is no escape from the conclusion that the interior of the earth, so far from gradually parting with its heat and cooling down, must actually be getting steadily hotter. The heat generated within, even after the lapse of hundreds of millions of years, would scarcely appreciably escape from the surface, for, as Lord Kelvin deduced, the central core of the earth must be almost insulated thermally from the surface, owing to the low conductivity of the rocks composing the crust. He assumes throughout an average composition of the globe of two parts of radium per million million, which is considerably below the average he found for the rocks

of the crust, and he calculates that in the course of a hundred million years this minute quantity will produce a rise of the temperature of the central core of no less than 1,800 degrees centigrade. Unless, therefore, this heat is utilized in some unknown way, or the disintegration of the radio-elements is prevented by the high temperature and pressure, the ultimate fate of the globe must be very much as depicted in the Biblical tradition. Sooner or later the crust must succumb to the ever-increasing pressure within, and the earth must become again, what it is supposed once to have been, a vastly swollen globe of incandescent gas. As Joly remarks, there is no evidence that this has not already occurred more than once, nor assurance that it will not recur. So far as physical science yet can deduce, the accumulation of thermal energy within a world containing elements undergoing atomic disintegration during the 'geological age' must alternate with a state of things which might be termed the 'incandescent age', in which this accumulated energy is dissipated by radiation. This periodic cycle of changes must continue until the elements in question have disintegrated—that is, over a period which radioactive measurements indicate is of the order of tens or hundreds of thousands of millions of years. During the incandescent age the loss of heat by radiation, which increases according to the fourth power of the temperature, is immensely greater than could be supplied even by atomic disintegration. . . . As soon as sufficient of the heat energy of a world has been radiated away for a solid crust to form, the poor thermal conductivity of this crust at once reduces the radiation loss to a negligible figure again, a fresh geological age is inaugurated, and again the heat accumulates within. This view, that the elements contain within themselves the energy from which Nature obtains her primary supplies, and that in cosmical time 'geological age' and 'incandescent age' alternate as the night and day, however imperfect it may still be, is at least more in harmony with existing knowledge than the older conventional view that the universe was wound up once for all in the beginning like a clock, to go for a certain time, for the most part quietly and uneventfully, pursuing its allotted path towards ultimate physical stagnation and death. But what a picture it conjures up of life and of the precariousness of its tenure—from its lowest beginnings to its highest evolution, not a permanent accomplishment, but a process to be inaugurated and consummated afresh, if at all, between the ending and beginning of each new cosmical day!" (pages 177-180).

Much of this is so profoundly Oriental, that it would be easy to translate it into Sanskrit. Professor Soddy himself suggests this Eastern colouring when he speaks of the ultimate fate of the globe as depicted in the Biblical tradition. Perhaps the passage he has in mind is the fine outburst of eloquence in the second letter of Saint Peter: "Looking for and hasting unto the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (III, 12-13).

Like so many things in the Bible, for example, the narratives of the Creation and the Flood, or what Saint Paul says of psychical and spiritual bodies, the same things had been taught centuries or millenniums earlier in the Scriptures of the East.

The "days and nights of Brahma", and the melting of the elements with fervent heat, are a fundamental part of the cosmical teaching of the greater *Puranas,* as we shall presently show. From a later Buddhist Scripture, the *Visuddhi Magga,* "The Path of Purity", we may quote a peculiarly vivid description of this dissolution of the world, which closely parallels the conception of Professors Joly and Soddy, except that the rising temperature attributed by them to internal activity is here attributed to the appearance of successive suns:

"When now a long period has elapsed from the cessation of the rains, a second sun appears. Here is to be supplied in full what was said by The Blessed One (the Buddha) in the Discourse on the Seven Suns, beginning with the words, 'There comes, O priests, a time'. When this second sun has arisen, there is no distinction of day and night; each sun rises when the other sets, and an incessant heat beats upon the world. And whereas the ordinary sun is inhabited by its divinity, no such being is to be found in the cycle-destroying sun. When the ordinary sun shines, clouds and patches of mist fly about in the air. But when the cycle-destroying sun shines, the sky is freed from mists and clouds, and is as spotless as a mirror, and the water in all streams dries up, except in the case of the five great rivers. After a lapse of another long period, a third sun appears, and the great rivers dry up. After the lapse of another long period, a fourth sun appears, and the sources of the great rivers in the Himalaya Mountains dry up, namely, the seven great lakes. . . . After the lapse of another long period, a fifth sun appears, and the mighty ocean gradually dries up, so that not enough water remains to moisten the tip of one's finger. After the lapse of another long period, a sixth sun appears, and the whole world becomes filled with smoke, and saturated with the greasiness of that smoke, and not only this world but a hundred thousand times ten million worlds. After the lapse of another long period, a seventh sun appears, and the whole world breaks into flames; and just as this one, so also a hundred thousand times ten million worlds. All the peaks of Mount Sineru (Meru), even those which are hundreds of leagues in height, crumble and disappear in the sky. The flames of fire rise up and envelop the Heaven of the Four Great Kings (Maharajas). Having there burnt up all the mansions of gold, of jewels, and of precious stones, they envelop the Heaven of the Thirty-Three. In the same manner they envelop all the heavens to which access is given by the first trance. Having thus burnt up three of the Brahma-heavens, they come to a stop on reaching the Heaven of the Radiant Gods. This fire does not go out as long as anything remains; but after everything has disappeared,

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it goes out, leaving no ashes, like a fire of clarified butter or sesamum oil . . ." (Warren, *Buddhism in Translations,* pages 322-324).

This magnificent description of what Professor Soddy calls the "incandescent age" is followed by another which pictures the gradual rebirth of the world and the initiation of a new "geological age". It is too long to quote in full, but we may indicate the process described by a few illustrative passages:

"Now after the lapse of another long period, a great cloud arises. And first it rains with a very fine rain, and then the rain pours down in streams . . . then a wind arises, below and on the sides of the water, and rolls it into one mass which is round like a drop on the leaf of a lotus. . . . The water is sweet, and as it wastes away, the earth arises out of it. . . . The beings, who have been living in the Heaven of the Radiant Gods, leave that existence . . . and are reborn here on earth. They shine with their own light and wander through space. Thereupon they taste that savoury earth, are overcome with desire, and fall to eating it ravenously. Then they cease to shine with their own light, and find themselves in darkness. . . . Just as when panick-seed porridge is cooking, suddenly bubbles appear and form little hummocks in some places, and leave other places as depressions, while others are still flat; even so the mountains correspond to the little hummocks, and the oceans to the depressions, and the continents to the flat places. . . ."

Thus, according to the teaching attributed to the Buddha, twenty-five centuries ago, is ushered in the new "geological age". Making allowance for difference of imagery, it is essentially akin to the cosmical speculations of Professors Joly and Soddy, except in one fundamental matter, to which we shall come shortly.

Not only that, but the periods of time contemplated are of the same order of magnitude. We shall get a more concise statement of these in the older *Puranas.* To introduce the discussion of these periods, we may summarize what Professor Wilson says, in his Preface to the translation of the *Vishnu Purana.*

Professor Wilson explains that the first of the six books is occupied chiefly with the details of the primary and secondary periods of emanation. The first book sets forth how the universe proceeds from Prakriti (Nature), or eternal primal matter; the second, in what manner the forms of things are developed from the elementary substances previously evolved, and how they re-appear after their temporary destruction. Both these emanations are periodical; but the termination of the first occurs only at the end of the life of Brahma (the Evolving Divinity), when not only all the gods and all other forms disappear, but the elements are again merged into primary substance, besides which only one spiritual being exists. The secondary dissolution takes place at the end of every Kalpa, or "day" of the Evolving Divinity, and affects only the form

of inferior creatures and lower worlds, "leaving the substances of the universe entire, and sages and gods unharmed".

It will have been noted that the same relation between primary and secondary periods was suggested by Professor Soddy: "This periodic cycle of changes (the alternation of 'geological age' and 'incandescent age') must continue until the elements in question have disintegrated—that is, over a period which . . . is of the order of tens or hundreds of thousands of millions of years." We have here both the secondary periods, Kalpas, and the primary period, corresponding to "the life of the Evolving Divinity".

Compare with Professor Soddy's estimate of the magnitude of these periods, the figures of the same order in the *Vishnu Purana:* A year of mortals is equal to a day of the gods. A period of four Yugas is equal to 12,000 divine years, or 4,320,000 mortal years. A thousand of these periods of 12,000 divine years, or 4,320,000,000 years of mortals, is equal to one day of the Evolving Divinity, and his night is of equal duration. At the close of a day of the Evolving Divinity, a dissolution of the universe takes place, which lasts through a night of the Evolving Divinity, equal in duration to his day. At the end of that night, he awakes and emanates anew. A year of the Evolving Divinity is composed of three hundred and sixty such days, and a hundred such years constitute his life. The year of Brahma, therefore, is equal to a period of 1,555,200,000,000 years of mortals, which is fairly comparable to the "hundreds of thousands of millions of years" of Professor Soddy's interesting speculation, while the conception of alternations of "cosmical days" and "cosmical nights", of "incandescent age" and "geological age", is substantially the same as the Oriental system of "days and nights of Brahma", of Kalpas and Yugas, of Manvantaras and Pralayas.

Another noteworthy book, *The Origin and Evolution of Life,* by Henry Fairfield Osborn (1918), takes up the story at the point at which Professor Soddy drops it; namely, the renewal of life in the world at the beginning of a "geological age". In this book again, one is tempted to make the same generalization as before, that the author first worked out, through many industrious years, the concrete substance of his theme, and then that he let his creative imagination work, pondering and brooding, performing the concentrated meditation of Patanjali, and adding the elements of greatest value after the laborious part of the task was done; this time, in the Preface. And here, as before, we shall have to note a remarkable divergence from the thought suggested by the name of the Eastern sage. We shall speak of the valuable constructive elements first, and then return to the marked omission in both cases.

The first vital thought begins the Preface: "In these lectures we may take some of the initial steps toward an energy conception of Evolution and an energy conception of Heredity and away from the matter and form conceptions which have prevailed for over a century."

Here we have once more the principle touched on at the beginning of these "Notes": the view that the cosmic Substance is, at the one pole, Spirit, or energy, and, at the other, Matter and form; a view which is fundamental with students of Theosophy. The sentence quoted from Professor Osborn, therefore, marks the beginning of a new epoch; while he uses the word Energy, rather than Spirit, for reasons that are easily intelligible, it nevertheless remains true that he is upholding a conception of Evolution which tends directly towards the spiritual view of students of Theosophy. Professor Osborn realizes the mystery of life.

A part of his second paragraph emphasizes this: "Lest the reader imagine that, through the energy conception, I am at present even pretending to offer an explanation of the miracles of adaptation and of heredity, some of these miracles are recited in the second part of this volume to show that the germ evolution is the most incomprehensible phenomenon which has yet been discovered in the universe, for the greater part of what we see in animal and plant forms is only the visible expression of the invisible evolution of the heredity-germ."

This insistence on the invisible forces which control evolution recurs again and again throughout Professor Osborn's book. For example, speaking of "chromatin", equivalent to the "germ-plasm" of a generation ago, he says: "It is the *visible centre* of the energy complex of heredity, the larger part of which is by its nature *invisible*. Chromatin, although within our microscopic vision, is to be conceived as a gross manifestation of the infinite energy complex of heredity, which is a cosmos in itself" (page 95, note). And three pages further on, he speaks of "the chromatin as a microcosm"; while the parallel columns on page 142, the first entitled "The visible body", and the second, "The invisible germ", are strongly suggestive of the occult teaching in *The Secret Doctrine,* just as what Professor Osborn has to say of "four 'life elements', namely, Hydrogen, Oxygen, Nitrogen, and Carbon", immediately recalls ideas in the same work.

We may quote one more very interesting passage regarding the "invisible" forces, or unknown powers, directing evolution: "May there not be in the assemblage of cosmic chemical elements necessary to life, which we shall distinguish as *'life elements'*, some *known* element which thus far has not betrayed itself in chemical analysis? This is not impossible, because a known element like radium, for example, might well be wrapped up in living matter but remain as yet undetected, owing to its suffusion or presence in excessively small quantities or to its possession of properties that have escaped notice. Or, again, some *unknown* chemical element, to which the hypothetical term *bion* might be given, may lie awaiting discovery within this complex of known elements. Or an unknown source of energy may be active here" (page 6).

Of equal importance with the "energy concept of life", and equally fundamental in Professor Osborn's thought, is the insistence on Law

as against Chance, throughout the whole process of the evolution of living beings. Only a few phrases can be quoted: "That life forms have arisen through *law* has been the opinion of another school of natural philosophers, headed by Aristotle. . . ." The question "of law versus chance, in the evolution of life, is no longer a matter of opinion, but of direct observation. So far as law is concerned, we observe that the evolution of life forms, is like that of the stars: their origin and evolution as revealed through palæontology go to prove that Aristotle was essentially right when he said that 'Nature produces those things which, being continually moved by a certain principle contained within themselves, arrive at a certain end'" (pages 8-9). As to this guiding power of "Nature", there is a remarkable passage on page 156: "This principle of homodynamy and heterodynamy applies to the body as a whole and to every one of its parts, according to two laws: first, that each individual part has its own mechanical evolution, and, second, that the same mechanical problem is generally solved on the same principle. This, we observe, is invariably the ideal principle, for, unlike man, nature wastes little time on inferior inventions but immediately proceeds to superior inventions."

If space permitted, it would be of absorbing interest to follow Professor Osborn in his application of the "energy concept of life", and "the principle of law against fortuity", through the successive ages, of invertebrates, of fishes, of amphibians, of reptiles, of mammals and of man, which correspond, in a general way, to the Oriental teachings of the succession of great life-periods. But we can quote only one passage, which bears directly on the question of life-periods and cycles: "Of the eighteen great orders of reptiles which evolved on land, in the sea, and in the air, during the long Reptilian Era of 12,000,000 years, only five orders survive to-day. . . . The evolution of the members of these five surviving orders has either been extremely slow or entirely arrested during the 3,000,000 years which are generally assigned to Tertiary time; we can distinguish only by relatively minor changes the turtles and crocodiles of the base of the Tertiary from those living to-day. In other words, during this period of 3,000,000 years the entire plant world, the fish, the amphibian, and the reptilian worlds have all remained as relatively balanced, static, unchanged or persistent types, while the mammals, radiating 3,000,000 years ago from very small and inconspicuous forms, have undergone a phenomenal evolution, spreading into every geographic region formerly occupied by the Reptilia and passing through multitudinously varied phases not only of direct but of alternating and of reversed evolution. During the same epoch the warm-blooded birds were doubtless evolving, although there are relatively few fossil records of this bird evolution" (page 231).

The inquiry into the causes of this remarkable slowing down and arrest of development is of deep interest. We can quote only the last paragraph: "Consequently the causes of the arrest of evolution among

the Reptilia appear to lie in the internal heredity-chromatin, i. e., to be due to a slowing down of physicochemical interactions, to a reduced activity of the chemical messengers which theoretically are among the causes of rapid evolution."

If Professor Osborn does not ask the question which logically follows, namely, "What are the causes of this slowing down, this reduced activity, in the invisible forces behind the chromatin?"—it is simply because he has frankly admitted, from the outset, that "we know to some extent *how* plants and animals and man evolve; we do not know *why* they evolve."

Professor Osborn speaks of periods of 3,000,000 years for the Tertiary, and 12,000,000, for the era of Reptiles. This raises the deeply interesting question of the total length of geological time since the deposition of sediment began, under something resembling present conditions. This question is discussed by Professor Osborn, and he appears (page 153) to estimate the whole period at only 60,000,000 years. But there are weighty reasons for greatly extending this estimate; among others, the immensely greater periods which appear to be demanded by the processes of radioactivity which we have touched on: the degeneration of uranium through the expulsion of helium, for example.

This aspect of the question, as well as others, is very ably discussed by Mr. Arthur Holmes, in *The Age of the Earth,* which fully considers the time estimate drawn from the total of sediment deposited; the estimate based on the total quantity of salt in the sea; on the accumulation of carbonate of lime; and also on the relation between such a substance as uranium or thorium, and the helium which it has extruded. On page 89, he gives tentative results, as follows: Using the accumulation of salt as a basis, he deduces a period of from 210,000,000 to 340,000,000 years; from the accumulation of sediment in the sedimentary rocks, he derives a period of from 250,000,000 to 350,000,000 years; from the accumulation of calcium carbonate, the figure reached is 320,000,000 years.

These estimates are peculiarly interesting to students of Theosophy who are acquainted with the statement in *The Secret Doctrine* (1888, II, 710): "It is certain, on occult data, that the time which has elapsed since the first sedimentary deposits is equal to 320,000,000 years."

There is very much, therefore, in the speculations of Professor Soddy regarding the alternation of "cosmical days and nights", and in the thoughtful views of Professor Osborn regarding the energy conception of life and the obedience of evolution to cosmic law, which students of Theosophy will sincerely welcome, as a marked approach toward the teachings of the Eastern Wisdom, as they understand them. The progress in the thirty-three years since *The Secret Doctrine* was published is noteworthy and significant.

This brings us at last to the marked points of contrast, which have already been suggested.

First, as regards the cosmical speculations of Professor Soddy. He conceives the whole mass of substances, of chemical elements, which make up the earth (and other worlds), as gradually passing from their present solid state to a phase of incandescent gas; then, because of the rapid radiation of energy, as again condensing, and taking substantially the same solid forms as before; each of the elements, numbering nearly a hundred, having its own complex atomic form; each atom being, in fact, a cosmos, "far more complex than a grand piano", to use his own simile, these atoms apparently being small solar systems of whirling electrons.

The conception, therefore, is, that these infinite myriads of tiny solar systems preserve their orderly character, their inner electron rotation, through the "age of incandescence", and return in an orderly manner to their former place in the re-solidified world.

Of this conception, we have no criticism whatever. But we do view with wonder the corollary he attaches to it: that the appearance or revival of life on the restored world, if it should happen, is a happy accident.

Exactly the same criticism applies to Professor Osborn. He steadily, and, as we think, quite rightly, holds out against Darwin's idea that chance determines the processes of evolution, insisting that they obey cosmic law. None the less, and this appears to us a startling philosophical hiatus, Professor Osborn appears to hold that the most vital fact of all, the original appearance of life on our planet, was the result of a happy chance, a sheer piece of "fortuity".

The cause would seem to be, as we have suggested, that, while both have meditated profoundly, one element of meditation has been lacking in both: namely, the consciousness of consciousness itself. They might almost be said to be unconscious that they are conscious, so slight is their grasp on the fundamental reality of consciousness.

Professor Osborn often quotes Huxley. But we remember a fine passage of Huxley's, in which he says that, while certain philosophers have sought to derive consciousness from matter or force, he, in the hardness of his heart or head, cannot see how consciousness could conceivably be derived from either matter or force. The materialists who have tried to bite that file have, as he vividly says, simply broken their teeth.

The missing element in their meditation would, therefore, seem to be meditation on consciousness itself; the immediate recognition of its reality and character. And nowhere, perhaps, is there a happier definition of consciousness than in the Buddhist dialogue between King Menander and the sage Nagasena: "In exactly the same way, your majesty, whatever form a man beholds with the eye, of that he is conscious with the consciousness; whatever sound he hears with the ear, of that he is conscious with the consciousness; whatever odour he smells with the nose, whatever taste he tastes with the tongue, whatever tangible thing he touches with the body, whatever idea he conceives with the mind, of that

he is conscious with the consciousness. Thus, your majesty, consciousness is the act of being conscious!" (Warren, page 182).

And the act of being conscious is something as different from energy as it is from matter, just as Huxley said.

The Eastern Wisdom rests on consciousness; on the steady recognition of consciousness, not as something considered theoretically, but in the very act of being conscious, which is a far more real miracle than the miracles of heredity rightly recognized by Professor Osborn; on the study of consciousness, the gradual growth and expansion of consciousness, until stages of consciousness are reached, spiritual and divine, which give an insight into the laws, the invisible causes, the existence of which Professor Osborn so clearly recognizes.

In a remarkable passage (page 182), Professor Soddy considers the traditional association of transmutation with the elixir of life, and asks: "Is, then, this old association of the power of transmutation with the elixir of life merely a coincidence? I prefer to believe it may be an echo from one of the many previous epochs in the unrecorded history of the world, of an age of men who have trod before the road we are treading to-day, in a past possibly so remote that even the very atoms of its civilisation literally have had time to disintegrate."

But the truth would seem to be, that it was not so much the study of radiant elements, as of radiant consciousness itself, which taught the wise men of the immemorial past, not this secret only, but many of the deeper secrets of spiritual insight and of immortality.

As a general criticism of the two very able works considered, we, therefore, think that what is lacking in both is a thorough recognition of the reality and character of consciousness, which might be expected to yield two results: first, an understanding of how, even throughout the "age of incandescence", the higher forms of consciousness persist, "in the Heaven of the Radiant Gods", as the Buddhist book symbolically says, ready to manifest themselves again in the new "geological age"; and, second, a deeper insight into those invisible forces insisted on by Professor Osborn, the processes of which, as he describes them, are so analogous to processes of consciousness; so that he compares the inventions of "Nature" with the inventions of man, in terms not flattering to the latter. Is it not thinkable that, in a heightened, deeper and more intuitive consciousness, we should find a closer approach to Nature's perfect handiwork, and, therefore, a clue to the workings of these "invisible forces"?

The Eastern wisdom begins practically at the point where these men of science stop; with the real exploration of consciousness, in its ascending degrees. But there is no good reason why they should stop. We urge them to go valiantly forward, to cross the line between mortality and immortality.

FRAGMENTS

ONCE the question was asked: Help us, O Wise One, to comprehend how we may find unity in diversity, truth in falsehood.

This is the answer that was recorded:—

Unity in diversity, always, when faith and understanding have made the mind synthetic instead of critical, as is the lower mind. Truth in falsehood, never. Falsehood is a perversion, and must be transmuted back again to truth.

Unity springs from God, and diversity springs from God. Unity is life as God sees it; diversity is life as man sees it, for man sees but part of which God sees the whole, being that whole himself. For that which we are not, we cannot see, since sight is the expression of the power of comprehension. We pass the angels on the road, but we do not see them, because, lacking altogether the angelic nature, we do not comprehend it. Comprehension comes before sight. Where there is sight before comprehension, it is not sight, but psychic vision.

It is not wrong for man to see life as diversity; diversity creates comparison, and through comparison we learn, as the rubbing of two sticks produces fire. It is the law of illumination. Man errs when he makes of diversity a finality, saying: "This is the only way. I alone have truth";—forgetting fundamental unity, denying his faith, that is, neglecting God, who, though triune, is yet one.

There exists your truth and my truth. Yet, in that they are truth, they are essentially one. We should not ignore their differences, as we do not ignore the fact that you have one body and I have another body, that you have one mind and I have another mind, or that you have one soul and I have another soul. But the spirit and the life which animate these, our differences, are one. As St. Paul saith: God *is* all *in* all.

Faith is our ladder while we climb to knowledge. Why not faith in the spiritual life, as well as faith in the material life, where our daily existence is rooted and grounded in faith?—in the rising and setting of the sun, in the security of the earth in space, in the return of the seasons with spring-time and harvest. Yet from material eyes, that which lies behind the veil of these manifestations is invisible, mere matter of speculation and of faith. Even so, the whole civilization of man is based upon them.

Falsehood is not an expression of diversity of mind, however much

some may try to prove it so; falsehood is an expression of *dishonesty of will.* A pure motive precludes falsehood.

The perverted, self-seeking will is the child of the devil, the father of lies. All those possess truth who honestly seek and serve it *for its own sake,* regardless of diversity of mind. All possess falsehood who seek only themselves. Their formulæ may be true, but their faith is a lie.

The would-be disciple who waits for more favourable opportunities has not as yet the making of discipleship in him. "Adventures are to the adventurous," and opportunities are to those who create them out of available circumstance. The manvantara will close, but the more favourable circumstance will never have appeared.

Nay, more, with each recurring cycle, big or little, the opportunities will be less favourable, the way a little harder, the situation more difficult, until it becomes desperate.

To the man who really desires discipleship, the immediate situation is always the best possible. The fact is, that any personal holiness, any spiritual advance that we can clearly recognize, is well within our present power of attainment. This is not always true of material things, whether of the body or of the mind, though it is far more often true of them than men generally realize. But in the spiritual world it is an invariable law, since vision follows power, as it must of necessity precede attainment.

The first half of discipleship is self-mastery through love; the second half, the attainment of union with the object of that love. What circumstance can be other than richest opportunity for the acquirement of either of these?

I cannot be a disciple, saith one, because I have a wife. Saith another: I cannot be a disciple because of many children, or large affairs, or poverty, or ill-health, or isolation, or too much company,—there is an endless list of them. Nay, friend, those circumstances exist that thou mayest become a disciple; without them thou couldst not arrive. Search the impediment in thy lack of understanding, or in the weakness of thy desire. God does not give his children stones for bread.

CAVÉ.

IN THE HOUSE OF DEATH
KATHA UPANISHAD

Translated from the Sanskrit with an Interpretation

III.

Because these things, lasting only until the morrow, O Thou who makest an end, consume this fire of all a mortal's powers, and even the whole of life is little; Thine, verily, are chariots, Thine are dance and song!

Not by wealth is the son of man to be satisfied. Shall we choose wealth, if we have seen Thee? Shall we live, so long as Thou art lord? But that is the boon to be chosen by me!

Having drawn near to the unfading Immortals, a fading mortal here below, and understanding Them, thoroughly considering the enjoyment of these beauties and of desire, who would delight in long-drawn life?

This, concerning which (even the Radiant Divinities) question, O Death,—What is in the Great Beyond—tell us that! This boon which enters the hidden—no other than this Nachiketas chooses!

THIS is the reply of Nachiketas, as the disciple, to the great temptation, the "temptation in the wilderness". It is the threefold temptation, appealing to the desires of the body, the vanity of the mind, the ambition of the spirit, which runs through the whole of human life; and the shameful succumbing to which, unhappily, constitutes so large a part of unregenerated human life.

The task of the disciple is, with the help of the Master, to see these things in contrast with the reality, the beauty, and holiness of the Eternal; and, having completely made the contrast, to choose the Eternal.

And, since the Great Initiation is the summing up of human life, in order to make it the stepping-stone to the Great Beyond, it would seem that the first part of the Great Initiation consists in a final viewing of this threefold allurement, and its final rejection.

This rejection by Nachiketas, as the disciple, is the theme of the passage just translated; and the rejection will always be made on the same grounds: the contrast between the Eternal and that which is out of the Eternal; or, putting this in a more concrete form, the contrast between the beauty of holiness, in the Master, and the desires of the lower self, as the disciple finds them within him.

This rejection must continue, in heart and mind and will, in understanding and in act, throughout the whole course of discipleship; discipleship is just this progressive choice and sacrifice, where the field of choice is lit by the light and love of the Master, the holy light of the

Eternal. First, through the Master's light, a discerning between the things of the Master and the things of the lower self; then the courageous sacrifice of the self to the Master; the process carried out in moment after moment, in situation after situation, in act after act, with the unceasing regularity of breathing, or the beating of the heart; like these, this perpetual choosing and sacrifice is the essential condition of life, life in the Eternal.

When the Master sees that both discernment and sacrifice have become habitual, inevitable, penetrating the whole nature of the disciple even to the most hidden corners and crannies, so that no element remains of bodily lust, of vanity, of the ambition which is always based on "the great lie of separateness"; when sacrifice of his own will to the will of the Master has become, not a second nature, but the primary, exclusive, and inevitable bent of his whole will and heart; when the Master sees the heart of the disciple to be clean utterly, then, it would seem, comes the Great Initiation, which is the theme of the eleventh book of the *Bhagavad Gita,* and of much of the Apocalypse, especially the fourth chapter. The inner life and consciousness of the disciple become one with the life and consciousness of the Master, the life and consciousness of the whole Divine Hierarchy; the holy, illimitable life and light of the Logos, the very Being of the Eternal. During the Great Initiation, the disciple, through this union with his Master, is one with the Eternal, possessing the full consciousness, the omniscience and omnipotence of the Eternal. He has become the Eternal, making actual in his conscious realization the great truth that underlies and sanctifies all life: that the true Being of each one of us is, indeed, the Eternal.

The tradition is that, during the Great Initiation, the disciple sees clearly all steps of the divine stairway, up to, and including, the ultimate Being of the Most High; but that, after the Initiation is complete, and he returns to waking consciousness, he sees clearly only the next step, the task immediately before him, revealed by his Master's light. He must set himself to that task. When it is completed, the Great Mystery will again descend upon him, the Eternal will be once more revealed; and he will return from that Illumination filled with the vision of a greater task, a further step forward toward the ultimate goal.

Since the Great Initiation consists, not in set teaching, but in the union of the disciple's consciousness with the consciousness of the Master and the consciousness of all the Heavenly Host, it is clear that no written record of set teaching can embody it.

Therefore, the remainder of this Upanishad is not a continuation and completion of the Drama of the Mysteries, but rather a series of precepts and teachings, as we may believe, from some book of discipline for disciples. Every part of it will lead up to the supreme Mystery; but, for a knowledge of the Great Mystery itself, we must await the day of final trial and illumination, when death shall be swallowed up in victory.

We come, therefore, to the series of precepts for disciples, though the form of a dialogue between Death and Nachiketas is still loosely maintained:

One thing is the better; other than that, verily, is the dearer. These two draw a man in different directions.

Of the two, for him who takes the better it is well; he fails of his goal who, verily, chooses the dearer.

The better and the dearer come near to a man; viewing both well, the wise man discerns between them. For the wise man chooses the better above the dearer; the fool through lust of possession, chooses the dearer.

Thou, indeed, pondering over dear and dearly loved desires, Nachiketas, hast passed them by; not this flowery way of wealth hast thou accepted, in which sink many of the sons of men.

Far different are these two ways: the unwisdom of delusion, and that which is known as wisdom. I hold Nachiketas a chooser of wisdom; nor do many desires draw thee astray.

Others, turning about in the unwisdom of delusion, self-wise, thinking themselves learned, stray, wandering in the way, deluded, like the blind led by the blind.

This is so clear that it needs hardly any comment. It may stand for the practical application of the whole of the Eastern Wisdom.

The point to keep in mind would seem to be that the initial choice of the disciple is only the first step; it must be followed by successive choosings of the better rather than the dearer, day by day and moment by moment. It must be kept in mind, it must be engraven on the heart, that every moment brings its choice of the better, whether as effort or as sacrifice and acceptance. And unbroken, never flagging effort, is by no means the least difficult sacrifice. Often we feel ourselves ready to ask for suffering rather than the hard necessity of effort; but to seek suffering that we may shirk effort, is to choose the dearer rather than the better.

The word here rendered "the unwisdom of delusion" is hard to translate in its full meaning, because it goes back to a deep conception of the whole universe of Life. There is the Eternal, beginningless, undying, everlasting; there are also all manifested and transitory things, the whole many-coloured pageant of the worlds, which are unreal in so far as they are not eternal.

In every situation, in everything without exception, both these powers or elements are present: the Eternal, and that which is but the painted apparition of the Eternal, part of the great Glamour of things visible and manifest. Wisdom must discern between them, but it is a moral discerning, an act of will and sacrifice, rather than an act of understanding; or, more truly, an act at once of sacrificial will and understanding. The East, perhaps, lays the greater emphasis on the understanding; the West, on the choice of the will. But this is mainly a

matter of emphasis. Both discernment and sacrifice must be present in each moment, each act, if the goal is to be completely won.

The Great Beyond shines not to the child, led forward by allurement, misled by the delusion of wealth. "This is the world! There is none beyond!"—thinking thus, again and again he falls under my dominion.

He who is not to be gained by many, even for a hearing; whom many know not, even when they hear: wonderful is the speaker, blessed is the receiver of Him; wonderful is the knower, receiving the teaching from the blessed.

Nor when declared by the lower man is He to be well known, though pondered in many ways. There is no going to Him, unless He be declared by the other, for He is inconceivably more subtile than the measure of the subtile.

Nor is this mind to be gained by reasoning; declared by the other, verily, it may be known well, beloved!—this, which thou hast gained, for thou holdest the Real firmly; may there be for us a questioner like thee, Nachiketas!

The fundamental thought here is the divine and mysterious principle which makes possible the Great Initiation: the sharing of consciousness by virtue of the ultimate reality that all consciousness is One, namely the consciousness of the Eternal.

Were it not true that the consciousness of the supreme Eternal is the highest and most real consciousness of each one of us, it would be eternally impossible for us to attain. It is only because our consciousness is realized as greater and ever greater, that we can go forward even a step upon the spiritual way.

And only because that supreme Eternal is the ultimate Self of each, and, therefore, of all, can there be any communication whatever between living beings. Even though we do not recognize it, every word spoken to another invokes that highest Self which is in us both. Even hatred and envy and malice bear testimony to that common Being.

Sharing of consciousness, therefore, is the deep, vital truth; a sharing of the consciousness of others, based ever on the supreme mystery, our partaking in the consciousness of the Eternal.

On this shared consciousness rests all human life; all human betterment, through sharing a consciousness even a little higher than our own. It is the direct sharing of the consciousness of the Master that makes discipleship possible; that makes the Great Initiation possible, when the supreme day comes.

Therefore, we are told: "There is no going to Him, unless He be declared by the other." The divine consciousness is communicated to the disciple by the Master; the knowledge of the Master is communicated by the disciple to him who is not yet a disciple, but who seeks discipleship. And the disciple communicates that consciousness by living in unison with it; there is no other way.

I know that what is called treasure is unenduring; nor is that unchanging One to be gained by things that change. Therefore the fire of Nachiketas has been kindled by me; for changing things I have gained the Unchanging.

The gaining of desire, the world's foundation, the unending fruit of sacrifice, great fame, the wide foundation, thou, wise in valour, Nachiketas, hast passed by.

But He, who is hard to see, who has entered the hidden place, who dwells in secret, standing in the deep, the Ancient, pondering on that divine One, through the path of union with the Higher Self, the wise leaves exultation and sorrow behind.

Hearing this and fully comprehending, the mortal, setting aside that which is conditioned, and gaining this subtile One, rejoices; for he has gained what is worthy of rejoicing. I think Nachiketas is an open dwelling.

In the loosely woven dialogue, the first paragraph is attributed to Nachiketas; the remainder, to the Teacher, Death.

The second paragraph is once more "the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them",—the great temptation which Nachiketas has overcome.

Having conquered, he is ready to seek the Divine Self within himself, to receive the Master's light. Therefore he is an open dwelling, emptied of all other things; ready to receive that Divinity which declares, in the words of the Sufi poem: "the house will not hold Me and thee."

Other than law, other than lawlessness; other than what is done or abstained from here; other than what has been or what shall be—what thou so seest, say that it is That.

That resting place which all Vedas proclaim and all fervent devotions declare; seeking for which, they fulfil the service of the Eternal—that resting place briefly I tell to thee: It is Om.

For this unchanging Om is the Eternal; this, verily, is the Supreme. Knowing, verily, this unchanging Om, whatever a man desires, that is his.

This is the most excellent foundation; this is the supreme foundation. Knowing this most excellent foundation, he is mighty in the world of the Eternal.

The full mystical meaning of Om is set forth in the *Mandukya Upanishad*. It is the universe as the manifestation of the Divinity, which yet remains one, the hidden Spirit.

That Divine Self is the theme of all Vedas, or books of wisdom; it is the goal of all fervent devotions. It is that which all disciples seek, each finding it first in his own Master.

Since all things are but the manifestations of the Divine One, he who has found that, possesses all things; whatever he desires, that he has.

This is in truth the most excellent foundation for the soul to rest on, since it is the foundation of the universe itself.

That Seer is not born, nor dies; nor does He proceed from aught, nor has any become He. Unborn, eternal, immemorial, the Ancient is not slain when the body is slain.

If the slayer thinks to slay Him, if the slain thinks of Him as slain, both these understand not; He slays not, nor is slain.

More subtile than the subtile, yet mightier than the mighty, the Self is hidden in the inmost heart of the creature here. Him he beholds, who is without desires, his sorrow gone, through the grace of that divine Disposer, beholding the mightiness of the divine Self.

This is the original of the splendid passage, in the *Bhagavad Gita,* in which Krishna, as the Initiator, incites Arjuna to the immemorial battle. It inspires the splendid intuition of the Higher Self, unborn, eternal, everlasting.

The contrasted nature of That which is more subtile than the subtile, and yet mightier than the mighty, is expressed in a very similar way in the parable of the grain of mustard seed, "which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." So, in the Upanishads, the Divine Self is likened to the least of seeds, the kernel of a grain of rice; it is also a great tree, lord of the forest; to it all beings come, as birds come to a tree to rest.

Seated, That goes far; resting, It goes everywhere. Who other than I is worthy to know that Divinity, who is joy without exultation?

Bodiless in bodies, stable among unstable things; understanding this mighty Lord, the Divine Self, the wise grieves not.

Not by speaking is this Divine Self to be gained, nor by reasoning, nor by much hearing. Whom It chooses, by him It is to be gained; this Divine Self chooses his body as Its own.

He who has not ceased from evil doing, who has not attained to peace, who is not one-pointed, whose heart has not gained peace, cannot win Him even by much knowledge.

Of Whom Priest and Warrior are the food; Whose condiment is Death: who knows truly where He is?

Here is a final truth which every disciple, everyone who has come into contact with discipleship, will confirm. After all is said and done, after all aspiration and sacrifice, every effort and act of discipline, there remains, in the unveiling of the Divine Life, an inscrutable element of grace.

Nor is it thinkable that, even when the mightiest Masters have attained the final culmination of divine illumination, they can penetrate the ultimate secret, the last and unfathomable mystery, why God is love.

(*To be continued.*) C. J.

SHELLEY AND KEATS

LORD BACON'S warning against "Idols of the Forum" is always timely. In considering the present subject, it must be heeded. Often words are accepted as exact and complete definition of a thing, while, in fact, these popular words (idols) may give no true account whatever of the matter under discussion. In his life-time, Shelley was called atheist. Many regard Keats as pagan. In a recent volume by Miss Underhill, which studies the method of devotion used by Christ, by His disciples, and by the Saints of the first four centuries, a line of Shelley's is used on the title page as motto. An inference from that title page might be: Shelley is then Christian after all. Is any one of these epithets correct,—atheist, pagan, Christian? Or may all be "idols"?

The subject involves a larger issue than the life and accomplishment of two poets. This issue is: the relation, on the one hand, of Religion to Science, and, on the other, to Art. Shelley was, first of all, a seeker and lover of truth; he was a scientist, a philosopher. Keats was an artist with comprehensive sight that gathered up every lovely object, "from silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon." What is the attitude of Religion toward Truth?—not toward "speaking the truth", which is an effort obligatory upon everyone, but toward Truth as a scientist understands it: Truth in its cosmical aspect which concerns man's place in the universe? What is the attitude of religion toward Beauty?

The second question would seem to have been answered in the Middle Ages by the invention of Gothic architecture. By creating a Christian form of art as a further medium of expression, the Christian religion seems to have recognized a unity underlying Virtue (or Goodness) and Beauty. But have the consequences of such unity ever been frankly faced? Has any one ever been told, that, in order to reach Heaven, he must not only be good, but must also love and appreciate Beauty? Francis Thompson was not a radical poet; he was an orthodox Roman Catholic. Yet he writes as follows of the present day attitude of the Roman Catholic Church toward Art: at best, Art is superfluous, at worst, pernicious, on an average, dangerous (*Essay on Shelley*).

As regards Truth and Science, the old hostility of Religion has disappeared. But nothing constructive has taken its place. Religion has a right instinct about the extreme harmfulness of Christian Science, Spiritualism, etc., but it has no metaphysical base from which to proceed against these errors. On the whole, its attitude is apologetic. It lacks confidence in its own *raison d'être*. It endeavours to justify its place in an economic world by a mad scramble for social service.

Such are conditions today, in this matter of Religion, Truth, and

Beauty. What were they a century ago, before the influence of Keats and Shelley had been radiated by enthusiastic followers, Tennyson and the Pre-Raphaelites? before Darwin and Wallace had rescued from oblivion the old doctrine of evolution? Here is Newman's estimate of what Keble did, beginning with the publication, in 1827, of *The Christian Year*. "He did that for the Church of England which none but a poet could do; he made it poetical. The author of *The Christian Year* found the Anglican system all but destitute of this divine element [note Newman's use of the word divine for poetry]. . . . heaviness, feebleness, unwieldiness, where the Catholic rites had the lightness and airiness of a spirit,—a dreariness which could be felt forcing itself upon the eye, the ear, the nostrils of the worshipper; a smell of dust and damp". Newman's loyal affection for an old friend, and a desire to get in a stroke against the English Church, led him to exaggerate what Keble did. Keble did turn upon the Church a thin rill of poetry. He could not have done even that, save for Shelley and Keats who had bombarded an arid sky, one with defiance, and the other with indifference, until the rain came down. Keble could not himself have brought down rain. Newman's phrase, "dust and damp", is a fair description of the Church in 1800, describing its alienation from more than Beauty. Is it any wonder that the sensitive eye, ear, and nostril of Keats turned from that Church with indifference?

On the side of Truth or Science, the case was no better. Consult a book like Dr. Patterson's conservative and orthodox *History of the English Church*. He shows that Wesley's revival did not, unfortunately, as it might have done, create a Franciscan Order in the Anglican Church, but resulted in the formation of a new Nonconformist body, which, while it often excelled in practice, was also very often weak, mentally. Within the Church, there was formed through the Wesleyan mission, an evangelical party whose practice also was excellent, but which failed, through lack of intellectual grasp, to maintain its position. Shelley had a simple and logical question to ask that dull, dead and dogmatic Church. He wanted to know why Plato and Socrates must perish, while the meanest spirited knave in England could boast of an immortality which he had done nothing to earn? There was no adequate answer. As a consequence, Shelley, until his death, regarded not only the Church but Christianity as superfluous and harmful.

Before considering what they offer in place of Religion, let us do Keats tardy justice by hearty recognition of his successful life. Tragedy is the word with which even his admirers wrong his splendid courage. What is there tragic in his gay and manly endurance of misfortune? Misfortune is not tragedy. Aristotle's definition of tragedy is—a losing struggle carried on by a noble but imperfect character which, finally, loses. Is it a moral defeat to die, aged twenty-five? Read the life of Keats so lovingly recorded by Colvin. Read the *Letters*, which have their human spots of depression and discouragement, but which, on the

whole, are so manly, gay, and forgetful of self for others. The *Life* and the *Letters* change pity for Keats into glowing admiration; we do not say in comment: this man was hardly used—alter his environment, give him another chance and he may do better. We say instead: how bravely this man accepted his lot—how clearly he recognized some of his weaknesses and the need to correct them; he has done well in this grade of Life's school—promote him to something higher and more difficult.

> It is not growing like a tree
> In bulk, doth make man better be;
> Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
> To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere;
> A lily of a day
> Is fairer far in May,
> Although it fall and die that night.
>
> (Ben Jonson)

Shelley's life, on the other hand, is a warning, not an inspiration. It shows the grave danger of two errors fashionable at the present time—Spiritualism and parlour Bolshevism. Shelley had a "psychic control," and his mad, flitting, fitful life was obedient to what he imagined "her" wishes for him to be; but, in fact, what he did was to gratify his natural impulses. Throughout his harassed years, he was the victim of nightmares and visions, unable to discriminate between delusions of night and facts of day. But the master motive in his career was the being who came to him in childhood and youth ("Epipsychidion"),

> on the air-like waves
> Of wonder-level dream, whose tremulous floor
> Paved her light steps.

Shelley's verse describes accurately the psychic plane and makes comment unnecessary. He did not see this being, because the glory of light surrounding her was too dazzling for his eyes to endure; but he took for granted that this celestial creature was feminine. "She" spoke to him of "knowledge and truth and virtue", and set before him lofty hopes of divine liberty. He dedicated himself to her service in this high enterprise, with desire that the world might be freed from its slavery. But, to his consternation, this being passed from the tremulous plane of wonder-level dream, to which Shelley seems to have had reasonably free access, into

> the dreary cone of our life's shade,

where she was lost to him. Thenceforward his purpose in life was single—to labour in her service for humanity, to free the world from every kind of oppression; and, in that effort, to find her again, and to

worship her in ultimate union. While his purpose is single, the episodes of his life alternate between quixotic endeavours at "uplift" work (even anticipating the present Irish Republic movement), and temporary raptures when he thinks he has found his lost vision incarnate in a mortal woman. Though, in opinion, he was radical and revolutionary to an extreme, he did not seek, by open violence, to overthrow traditional despotisms in family and state, in order to introduce his millennial period of brotherhood; he contented himself with propaganda allied to soap-box oratory. In the matter of marriage, however, he put his Bolshevist opinions into practice—with deplorable results; and led a mad-house kind of existence. The sane Keats would never cross his threshold. Much has been said, pro and con, about Shelley's relations with women. He seems to have been oblivious of women unless they could talk something that sounded like philosophy (he was often unable to distinguish between philosophy and its counterfeit). When one could so talk, Shelley became infatuated—the infatuations were of varying lengths—and were influenced by circumstances of environment. Madness and horror—the ends to which psychism and Bolshevist theories lead!

Shelley's life is tragi-comedy. Perhaps its most disgraceful incident is the episode with his wife Harriet, whom with his two infants, he had deserted, for a six-weeks' elopement to the Continent in company with Mary Godwin. When the fugitives returned to London, they were penniless. Shelley drove in a cab, *with* Mary Godwin, to his wife's lodgings, and obtained from her £20 to pay the cabman and so forth. Notwithstanding these deplorable weaknesses, the completeness with which Shelley gave himself to the measure of light he had, is an example that all might follow. His measure of light was but a shadow—"the awful shadow of some unseen power." Even a shadow, however, may possess something of radiant energy, if the Reality that casts it be of sufficient force. Thus we read in the fifth chapter of Romans that, as reports of Christ's life and of the miracles of His disciples spread, the people "brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least, the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them." What was the spiritual reality that cast the psychic shadow of which Shelley was enamoured? He gives a clue when he writes

Her spirit was the harmony of truth.

"The harmony of truth"—that sounds like something theosophical.

Shelley was born in 1792. He was passing out of childhood when the last cycle of the century closed—the cycle of the Lodge Messenger. We know that the Lodge effort of 1775, whatever it accomplished, did not result in the carrying over of an instrument like the T. S., which H. P. B. had to forge for her work of 1875. We can conjecture that the Lodge would wish to leave in the outer world some record of its effort, and that line after line of reserves had broken under the pressure of the Black

forces. Then the cycle closed in 1799. But, as the Lodge withdrew from the outer world, its *shadow* retreated behind it, slowly. And it was that shadow, "the harmony of truth", (we can conjecture) that fell upon Shelley. He and the other poets of that period, Keats, Wordsworth, Coleridge, etc., preserve in their verse reflections of immortal Truth and Beauty. After their shortcomings and faults are noted, we should then acknowledge immense gratitude to these poets. It is as if, when the regular ranks had broken, boys of eight had been armed and called into action. By a miracle, those boys held, and waged their conflict remarkably well—for boys. It is the Beauty and Truth and Virtue radiant from that shadow—the shadow of the Lodge—that gives to the poetry of Shelley and Keats, charm and power. Shelley responded with self-abandon to his glimpse of an ideal. He sprang after it,—

Like one sandalled with plumes of fire.

How do we, members of the T. S. today, respond to the flood of light that has been poured upon us? Are we winged with fiery desire to fly along the Path of Discipleship? Shelley, mistakenly, sacrificed for his shadow, things that may be useful—fortune, reputation, friends. To us, the T. S. opens the gate from shadow to light. How ardently do we long for the Reality that awaits our taking? Shelley sang of the shadow ("Prometheus Unbound"):

Life of Life! thy lips enkindle
With their love the breath between them;
And thy smiles before they dwindle
Make the cold air fire.

Lamp of earth! where'er thou movest
Its dim shapes are clad with brightness,
And the souls of whom thou lovest
Walk upon the winds.

Are we not, rather, like snails, coiled in our shells, fixed upon the Path,—not travelling?

Keats and Shelley are mystical poets. Many people would add that both poets, notwithstanding possibly indignant protestations on their part, are, essentially, Christian, also. Miss Underhill's use of a line from Shelley as motto for her book, *The Mystic Way,* may represent that second point of view.

It is easy to understand the grounds for that opinion, since what separates the two poets from those who, by stricter usage, would be called Christian, is a difference, not of nature, but of degree. Without trying to establish precise definitions, we may take Dante as one of whose position there would be no question, either religious or poetic. Suppose we use as a figure for Dante's Paradise, the old symbol of a

celestial city, with towers and turrets resplendent in light. Dante dwells within that city. He is acquainted with its streets and citizens, its Lord and His Counsellors. The jewelled walls of that city,—emerald, sapphire, and amethyst—suffuse the clouds with rainbow-fire. Now all poets are not like Dante. Some are content to sing of the tints they see on the clouds. Others, more truly enamoured of beauty, follow the rainbow to the city gates, "every several gate, one pearl." Then, if they are disciples and seers, besides being poets,—as Dante was,—they go through the gates, and become citizens. But even to reach the jewelled wall,—is not that a high degree of victory? And to write its sparkle into verse, so that others, "cabin'd, cribb'd, confined" on earth, recognize an authentic glimpse of veritable fact—is it not entirely natural that prisoners of "sullen earth" should hail as saviours, those who bring them tidings of a "country far beyond the stars," outshining the sun and moon in splendour? Ought we to expect, from those who sit in darkness, fine discrimination between degrees of light—between the Lamb, which is the light of the city, and the lustrous wall and gates. To earth, it is all one glory, dazzling. Nor is it only to the prisoned inmates of "sullen earth" that such poetry comes with wings. What about the dwellers of that city who go to and fro in the pigsty of the world—when, on earth, they find mention of their home, and see a sparkling fragment from the "ageless walls"?

> For very love beholding
> Thy holy name, they weep.
> The mention of thy glory,
> Is unction to the breast.
>
> (Bernard of Cluny)

Is it not a sudden meteoric dart of heavenly fire that Shelley often gives, while Keats glows with steadier radiance?

> And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
> And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
> A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of Queens and Kings.

> Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
> And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
> As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;
> Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,
> And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
> And on her hair a glory, like a saint:
> She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
> Save wings, for heaven: Porphyro grew faint:
> She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.
>
> ("Eve of St. Agnes")

It is also easy to understand that those whose own wills are not one-pointed, suffer little perplexity in following guides of unequal mood

and temper. Even the *Divine Comedy* does not represent the ascent to heaven as swift and smooth. Many hesitancies, doubts and impediments hold back the pilgrim. But the pilgrim is taught (and the teaching of the Holy Spirit is comfort, also) that even these doubts and delays are occasions for greater gifts. On the other hand, Shelley and Keats, and poets in general, pass, in a breath, from ecstasy at Heaven's gate to shuddering dejection over man's inexplicable fate.

> I could lie down like a tired child,
> And weep away the life of care
> Which I have borne and yet must bear,
> Till death like sleep might steal on me,
> And I might feel in the warm air
> My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
> Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.
>
> (Shelley)

The passionate song of the nightingale drives gloomily into the heart of Keats a contrast between the bird's life and man's cruel fate,

> Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!

And an ecstasy of

> Dance and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth,

with magic casements and rainbow foam, ends in chilling doubt as he sees the enchanted foam become a barren sea, "perilous" and "forlorn." This alternation of melancholy with joy is only the restlessness of a soul without the walls, that has not come to rest in its Creator (cf. St. Augustine). Thus, while one can understand, and, in great part, sympathize with those who would class Shelley and Keats as Christian, it is safer to call them mystics. For while both poets give expression to Christian (and universal) truths, in poetizing some old legend, they do so unconsciously. What attracts them in the legend is its beauty. Dante would deliberately have shown the three sides of the legend—he would have shown it from the angles of the True and the Good as well as of the Beautiful. Keats and Shelley in setting forth its Beauty, set forth the True and the Good also—but far less consciously. They are poets and mystics,—but Christians, only potentially; and because they were not disciples, they could not understand.

In the Theosophical Quarterly for April, 1919, there is a study in "Notes and Comments" of Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. Theosophy had furnished to the student a key with which to open the meaning hidden within that drama of Initiation—a meaning that was hidden from Shelley himself. Let us now apply the key of Theosophy to the wonderful fragment which Keats worked and reworked without being able to conclude it,—*Hyperion*. In an early sonnet, Keats had written of seeing

> Upon the night's starr'd face,
> Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance.

Keats feared he might not live to write down what he saw. Fortunately he did live long enough to give us this beautiful fragment of his visions. *Hyperion* is a poem of epic scope, and shows, among other things, in what large dimensions Keats had learned to think and imagine. It is a story of

> Gray legends, dire events, rebellions,
> Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,
> Creations and destroyings.

The dire events recorded are the superseding of one set of powers by a second. This seems as if it might be revolution; but the poet calls it ordered change, not insurrection. The successes and failures of the persons involved are

> Symbols divine,
> Manifestations of that beauteous life
> Diffused unseen throughout eternal space.

The persons who carry along this symbolic action are majestic gods and princesses. There is Saturn, the dethroned monarch, who in grief over his lost sway, cries out:

> Cannot I create?
> Cannot I form? Cannot I fashion forth
> Another world, another universe,
> To overbear and crumble this to nought?

There is the Queen of the air who wails

> My life is but the life of winds and tides.

Finally, there is Hyperion himself, a swift and splendid god, though dethroned.

> Hyperion arose, and on the stars
> Lifted his curved lids, and kept them wide.
> And still they were the same, bright, patient stars.
> Then with a slow incline of his broad breast,
> Like to a diver in the pearly seas,
> Forward he stoop'd over the airy shore,
> And plunged all noiseless into the deep night.

In general, it is the theory of Evolution that Keats is unfolding under the symbols of the old Greek myth. Life, having evolved for the manifestation of itself, certain forms and faculties, is not content, but strives for higher and better modes of expression. Life succeeds in its endeavour—and if the old moulds and powers cannot maintain equal speed, cannot transform themselves to fit the new conditions, they are thrown off from Life's fast revolving wheel, and are left behind to perish. It is the law of growth; and one of the gods tries to console Saturn with this thought of law.

We fall by course of Nature's law,—not force
Of thunder, or of Jove.

He counsels Saturn to give up his personal view of their catastrophe and to look at it more philosophically:

As thou wast not the first of powers,
So art thou not the last.

Nothing more has overtaken Saturn through the advent of the new king than, through Saturn himself, had overtaken Saturn's predecessor—and a similar fate may in turn await the new ruler. It is the law of Karma.

As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer far
Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though once chiefs;
And as we show beyond that Heaven and Earth
In form and shape compact and beautiful,
In will, in action free, companionship,
And thousand other signs of purer life;
So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,
A power more strong in beauty, born of us
And fated to excel us, as we pass
In glory that old Darkness. . . .

* * * * * * *

For 'tis the eternal law
That first in beauty should be first in might.

It is the God of the Sea who thus reasons philosophically with Saturn—and reasons from experience. For he has caught sight of his own dispossessor, and he feels the justice of the dispensation that dethrones him in favour of the new and more splendid god.

Have ye beheld the young God of the Seas,
My dispossessor? Have ye seen his face?
Have ye beheld his chariot, foamed along
By noble winged creatures he hath made?
I saw him on the calmed water scud,
With such a glow of beauty in his eyes,
That it enforced me to bid sad farewell
To all my empire.

Apollo, the God of Light, is the new Emperor God, and his pinnacle of beauty gives the *coup de grâce* to the discouraged brood of the former gods; they feel they could never attain to his height of splendour. One of their number has heard him sing, and Apollo's transcendent sweetness drives despair deep into their hearts.

I stood upon a shore, a pleasant shore,
Where a sweet clime was breathed from a land
Of fragrance, quietness, and trees, and flowers.
From a bowery strand
Just opposite, an island of the sea,

There came enchantment with the shifting wind.
A living death was in each gush of sounds,
Each family of rapturous hurried notes,
That fell, one after one, yet all at once,
Like pearl beads dropping sudden from their string:
And then another, then another strain,
Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,
With music wing'd instead of silent plumes.

All nature responds to the singing of its new Lord and cries out:

Apollo! young Apollo!
The morning-bright Apollo! young Apollo!

This wonderful fragment breaks off suddenly just at the point where the youthful Apollo is entering, through pain, into the maturity of his powers.

Soon wild commotions shook him, and made flush
All the immortal fairness of his limbs:
Most like the struggle at the gate of death;
Or liker still to one who should take leave
Of pale immortal death, and with a pang
As hot as death's is chill, with fierce convulse
Die into life: so young Apollo anguish'd.

Taught by Theosophy, we understand what Keats is writing; we have glimpses of the celestial city of which he paints so lovely an image. The old myth symbolizes the superseding of the natural man by the spiritual. The first creature,—of the earth,—has served his turn, and must now yield to the second man, the Lord from Heaven, symbolized by Apollo, God of Light. The bewilderment of Hyperion and Saturn, at what seems to them catastrophe, is the bewilderment of the natural man whose eye cannot see, nor his ear hear, nor his heart conceive the hidden wisdom of God which is only discerned by the new, spiritual individual. So too, in the victorious anguish of young Apollo, there is a shadowing forth of that other young Victor, Christ, who took leave of death, and died into life. Keats lived to trace the symbols he read upon the night's starred face. But he did not live, nor did Shelley, to set forth the "high romance" within those symbols. That romance is Christianity.

One is loth to conclude a study of these inspiring poets, leaving them, as it were, shut out from Heaven. And if that be human feeling, how would Heaven itself regard this sentence upon two who caught so much of its beauty, and who, through the beauty they pass on, guide so many toward Heaven. Can not the Divine Compassion find excuses and reasons where human charity fails? Might not Shelley's flight of fire toward his goal, or Keats's dying sigh for steadfast love, win the regard of that Compassionate Heart which so generously interprets the motives of men?

One remembers the inscription casually placed upon Shelley's grave-

stone, "Cor Cordium." Are those words casual after all? While Shelley and Keats were writing their poems, there was maintained in France, from 1800 to 1820, a quiet effort of prayer which finally established the Society of the Sacred Heart. Is it a wild stretch of fancy to lodge Keats and Shelley in that Divine Heart? St. Thomas Aquinas was of the opinion that for special reasons an Angel might leave Heaven to baptise a dying pagan. Our conceptions of truth are so petty and distorted. We have disfigured the victorious Christ into a "pale Galilean." What if that "Cor Cordium" be a special baptism from Heaven—the seal of the Heart carrying with it the sign of the Cross made in proud recognition of two souls whose fire was but a single spark from His Flame, whose zeal for Truth was but a pale reflection of His own? Whatever their faults and short-comings, Shelley and Keats may be lodged secure in the safe retreat of that Heart. The vast and charitable spaces of eternity afford ample opportunity for their purification.

C. C. Clark.

You say your husband is a religious man; tell him when you meet him that I say I am not much of a judge of religion, but that in my opinion, the religion that gets men to rebel and fight against their own government, because, as they think, that government does not sufficiently help some men to eat their bread in the sweat of other men's faces, is not the sort of religion upon which people can get to heaven.

—Abraham Lincoln (1864).

A man who knows that he is a fool, is not a great fool.—Chuang Tzu.

Even though Olympian Jove does not avenge at once, he will do so, though he tarry long; and with their own lives and the lives of their children the wicked pay a heavy penalty for their sins.—Homer.

HISTORY AND ITS INTERPRETATION

THERE is a history dating from the fourteenth century which is prefaced by the following rather suggestive phrase, "History, a species of knowledge universally esteemed, largely cultivated, and manifoldly useful." After six centuries have added their quota of "useful" historical material, it would be interesting to know the extent to which this phrase is still recognized as true. Leaving aside the extent to which the subject is esteemed and cultivated, how is history used to-day? For what purpose, in the majority of cases, is it studied? To what extent has the modern tendency to turn from the past and throw away tradition, blinded us to its value? How general a recognition is there of the fact that in the nation and in the race, character is developing, evolution progressing, in a manner and toward a goal identical with that of the individual?

The idea of the close correspondence between individual and nation is not a new one. It was probably recognized as true, centuries before Plato, in his *Republic,* declared that the character of the state must depend on the character of the individuals that composed it, that a city can be no better than are its citizens. Coupling with this idea, the statement that the destiny of man is to become perfect even as the Father in heaven, we get a host of suggestions, the first perhaps being the need for a recognition of spiritual life and progress, as a vital element in the present day interpretation of history.

With the coming of the Christian era, a new element entered into the life of nations. Prior to that, separated and frequently hostile peoples lived an intensely national life with sharp lines of demarcation; and history, where historical records were kept, showed little consciousness of an interrelation of nations or of connection with the whole past of the human race. Christianity, with its teaching of the Father and of a common sonship, of a common humanity subject to the laws of a divine kingdom, established a sense of the continuity of the whole human race in the present and in the past. For centuries—through the Middle Ages—this resulted in a very one-sided view of historical facts, since all life was regarded so exclusively from the side of religion and the Church that other elements were frequently pushed out of their proper perspective. In our own day the pendulum has swung to the other extreme. The tendency now is to explain historical developments in any one of a number of ways, but practically all of them intensely materialistic. The most generally used, perhaps, is the economic interpretation, the effort to explain all human events as necessarily the outgrowth of economic

conditions. Some writers attempt to explain everything by biological laws, others by geographical conditions. Again, mathematics or mechanics is used, or the epochs of history are regarded as just so many stages of physiological growth and explained by physiological laws. But if, as has so often been quoted in these pages, the universe exists for the purposes of soul, certainly the true interpretation of human events would be less materialistic, more lofty than any of these.

The history before quoted—a universal history written by Ibn Khaldoun, a learned Arab, living in North Africa and Spain shortly after 1300—adopts a point of view which is, in some respects, unique. The author was one of the first to treat history as a science. He regards it as the science of civilization and sees in it a collective movement, an incessant and inevitable development. Recognizing the fact that nationality is to a people what individuality is to a person, he makes the *spirit* of a people (using the word in the same sense as the French *esprit*) his interpretation, so to speak, of all that he considers. Economic conditions, then, physical conditions and so on, fall into position as contributing causes of the spirit which characterizes a people. And in turn, the development and growth of that spirit is the cause of the events which mark the outer life of the people.

Khaldoun distinguishes very definitely, different grades of *esprit* with their attendant or resultant conditions—grading them from the state of envy, wrangling and strife, or perhaps luxurious ease, weakness and cowardice, up to that of intense religious ardour. The religious impulse (and in this is apparently included the religious zeal of the fanatic) he considers the highest and most powerful animating force. His distinction between this and the next lower grade is rather closely drawn when he portrays a large and powerful nation, relying for its strength on what is, in many respects, its excellent *esprit de corps,* overwhelmed and conquered by a nation much smaller in numbers, inadequately equipped, but animated by *esprit de corps* plus religious ardour—the spiritual force. Without the latter force, party spirit, self-interest, perhaps even cowardice may creep in under stress of circumstances. When the spiritual force is predominant, all unworthy sentiments disappear, all hearts are united, all work toward the same end, with devotion, valour, exaltation in the face of death—there is a synthesis of effort that is irresistible.

The idea of the close interrelation and interaction between individual and nation is markedly suggested in his account of the slow and laborious process by which the family spirit, then the tribal spirit, is developed, and finally a dynasty founded, the *right* to rule established (a process analogous to the development of real individuality in a man). And in this connection the author's view on the subject of nobility is interesting—a family has no claim to nobility, he thinks, simply because its ancestors were nobles. It may be influential and respected, but "only among families united and animated by a strong common feeling so as to form a powerful and distinguished confraternity, is nobility a reality." He

traces the course of nations through the stages of growth, till the prime is past; wealth, luxury, indulgence have brought their weakening effect; *esprit de corps* is lost, and the spirit of strife and insurrection is growing. Concerning a people in this state, he writes: "They have forgotten in what manner their empire had its beginnings. They are ignorant of how much God has done in order to raise the dynasty which governs them; they see a sovereignty well established, an authority which enforces obedience and maintains order in the State, without having need of the support which the family and tribal spirit could furnish it. They have no idea of the difficulties their ancestors had to surmount before arriving at power."—His observations are especially pertinent in our own day when such a condition as he depicts is so vividly before the world.

The history of Ibn Khaldoun is of interest here chiefly because it suggests an interpretation of history from the point of view of the inner life and development of the people, regarding external conditions in their proper subsidiary position. To the student of Theosophy, it may contain in its gradations of *esprit* a further suggestion of which its author was, without doubt, wholly unconscious. Most readers of the QUARTERLY are more or less familiar with the theosophical teaching of the seven principles—the idea that man is composed of seven fundamental aspects of the One Reality, three higher and four lower. Many of us have dwelt upon it sufficiently to recognize in ourselves, under varying circumstances, the operation, the predominance, of one principle or another—certainly to distinguish between those impulses and motives that are characteristic of the lower quaternary (the less good or actually evil elements in us), and those of the higher triad, the better element, the aspiring nature in us. Have we ever stopped to consider that by the law of correspondences—as in big so in little—the nation must be similarly constituted? Each nation, then, would be likewise composed of seven principles arranged or predominating as the aggregate of the principles of its individuals. There is something suggestive of this fact in the statement, made several centuries ago, that every nation has its governing principle; in England it was liberty, in Holland trade, in France honour of the King, and so on. And in the growth of a nation there should be discernible the same features that characterize the growth of character in a human being—the slow struggle toward the development of a true individuality, a gradually increasing self-knowledge, a hardly-won freedom and power to manifest its true self, and at last the period of achievement when it finally enters into its genius. Regarded from this point of view, the movements, the characteristics, the spirit of nations, take on a new significance, as we see in one situation the lower elements of greed, avarice, self-seeking, predominant, in another the higher virtues, honour, sacrifice, loyalty to principle; or, more probably, good and bad both at work, the nation in the throes of that struggle between higher and lower which so often overwhelms the individual.

It is said that we may have a very illuminating experience by going

back in thought, step by step, over our childhood and early life. We shall discover events so shaping themselves that, time after time, the same lesson was taught us, now in one way and now in another, as time after time we failed to learn, or only partially learned. We shall see one quality after another slowly and laboriously developed in us, with the patience that only the divine powers possess; or again, repeated opportunity offered for the conquest of some weakness or sin. We shall find that at fairly definite intervals, the same tendencies came to the surface, the same sides of our nature became active—our growth followed a cyclic law. And if, looking back over the past, we use our discoveries wisely and well, we shall regard them as guideposts, pointing the way to our right course for the future, indicating to some extent the lessons we still have to learn, the points where weakness must be most carefully guarded against, where the lower elements in us are likely to take us unaware, and the points where our real selves have the best vantage ground to fight from. With the threads of our life thus in hand, we shall be forewarned and forearmed for the future. Far more than that, we may be able to trace out the Master's plan for us, see what he means our life to be, and so, ceasing the struggle for a realization of our own plans and hopes and will, seek to follow his will, and consciously work with him.

There would be a parallel to this in what might be called the theosophical interpretation and the theosophical use of history. In viewing any situation in history, whether past or present, there would immediately be applied the questions: how has it come to be what it is? what does it tend toward? what causes have given it the character it possesses? what is its relation to the growth and the high destiny of mankind? One aid that has been suggested for this purpose is to ask ourselves, repeatedly, in reading a newspaper or a book, "How does this or that point affect the coming of the Master's kingdom?" To follow out this plan with completeness would, of course, require a deep understanding of human nature and a wide knowledge of world events. But it is worth while to make a beginning at the point where we now are, with our present limited understanding and distorted vision. And as the effort is persisted in, as we correct present impressions or conclusions by further observation, not only will our struggle with our own selves, our efforts at self-knowledge and self-mastery, aid us in understanding and interpreting world events, but our very effort to understand the latter will in turn help us to get outside ourselves, and thereby bring light to many a corner in our nature hitherto darkened, make clear many a problem hitherto unsolvable.

J. C.

THE SECRET DOCTRINE AND MR. EDISON

THE *Scientific American* for October 30, 1920, contains an interview recording Mr. Thomas A. Edison's "Views on Life and Death," as reported by Mr. Austin C. Lescarboura. The same ground was covered in a more popular way, in a second interview published at the end of January. The substance of these interviews may be divided into two parts: first, a discussion of the question whether communication with the dead is possible, a problem which Edison seeks to solve by the use of a delicate apparatus similar to the valve used in wireless telegraphy; and, second, Edison's conclusions concerning the nature of organic matter, a theory of living atoms, and a description of the part these atoms play in the formation of the conscious personality, with the further question whether the personality thus formed can survive the dissolution of the physical body.

The part of the interview which deals with communication between the living and the dead aroused a storm of controversy in the newspapers, as an episode in the general discussion of Spiritualism which has been going on for months. Much was said, and somewhat heatedly said, on both sides. The view of the most thoughtful Spiritualists appears to be that, if our human ears were attuned to finer vibrations, the disembodied personalities could speak to us, and we could hear them; but the main difficulty in the way of communication lies in the fact that, with all the desire in the world to communicate, disembodied personalities are hampered by the fact that they have not yet fully mastered the use of their newly acquired astral organs, and cannot use them in such a way as to come into contact with us; and, when they have at last learned to use these unfamiliar instruments, the law of progress carries them forward to a condition in which communication with those still embodied is no longer possible. On the other hand, it is held that, if we are willing to undergo the necessary training, we can go to them, though they cannot come back to us. By discipline and training, we can enter the state in which they live, and can return with information about it; just as we can go to a hospital to visit a sick friend there and can return with the memory of a conversation, while the sick friend is unable for the present to return the visit.

Among those who took part in the discussion, there were also those who held that communication with the dead could, in the nature of things, never be proved scientifically; or that, if such communication be possible, it is, nevertheless, morally wrong.

Since the valve, the apparatus which Edison proposes to use to

decide the possibility of communication with the dead, is still a physical mechanism, however sensitive, it is clear that it can respond only to a physical stimulus. But, if the vibrations of thought be super-physical, a mechanism is needed which will respond to the vibrations of thought. Therefore the test which Edison proposes appears to be quite inconclusive.

We purpose, however, to put aside for the present the question of communication with the dead, in order to consider Edison's theory of the nature of organic and conscious life and of the living atom.

The idea of the living atom is by no means a new one with Edison. More than thirty years ago, in *Harper's Magazine* for February, 1890, an earlier interviewer reported him as saying:

"I do not believe that matter is inert, acted upon by an outside force. To me it seems that every atom is possessed by a certain amount of primitive intelligence. Look at the thousand ways in which atoms of hydrogen combine with those of other elements, forming the most diverse substances. Do you mean to say that they do this without intelligence? Atoms in harmonious and useful relation assume beautiful or interesting shapes and colours, or give forth a pleasant perfume, as if expressing their satisfaction. . . . Gathered together in certain forms, the atoms constitute animals of the lower orders. Finally they combine in man, who represents the total intelligence of all the atoms."

"But where does this intelligence come from originally?" asked the interviewer.

"From some power greater than ourselves," Edison answered.

"Do you believe, then, in an intelligent Creator, a personal God?"

"Certainly. The existence of such a God can, to my mind, almost be proved from chemistry."

It is of deep interest to find Mme. H. P. Blavatsky commenting on this view, a month or two later, in her editorials in *Lucifer*. Thus, in April, 1890, she writes:

"Edison's conception of matter was quoted in our March editorial article. The great American electrician is reported by Mr. G. Parsons Lathrop in *Harper's Magazine* as giving out his personal belief about the atoms being 'possessed by a certain amount of intelligence,' and shown indulging in other reveries of this kind. For this flight of fancy the February *Review of Reviews* takes the inventor of the phonograph to task, and critically remarks that 'Edison is much given to dreaming,' his 'scientific imagination' being constantly at work. Would to goodness the men of science exercised their 'scientific imagination' a little more, and their dogmatic and cold negations a little less. . . ."

After more than thirty years, then, Edison has once more recorded his views concerning organic life and the living, intelligent atom. The substance of what he now says may be stated as follows:

1. Life, like matter, is indestructible.
2. Our bodies are composed of myriads of infinitesimal entities,

each in itself a unit of life; just as the atom is composed of myriads of electrons.

3. The human being acts as an assemblage rather than as a unit; the body and mind express the vote or voice of the life-entities.

4. The life-entities build according to a plan; if a part of the organism be mutilated, they rebuild this exactly as before.

5. Among the life-entities, ninety-five per cent are probably workers, and five per cent directors; the directors are located in the part of the brain known as the fold of Broca, as is proved by surgical operations.

6. The life-entities are indefatigable workers. If, for any reason, they depart from our bodies, they go to work on some other form of life. They cannot be destroyed; they simply change the form and character of their work, by a process of transformation and regeneration, so that they are used over and over again.

7. Science admits the difficulty of drawing a line between the inanimate and the animate; perhaps the life-entities extend their activities to crystals and chemicals.

8. While the "workers," the life-entities which have been doing the routine work of the body during life, depart at death in various directions, it is possible that the "directors" remain together as an assemblage; in this way the conscious personality might survive.

9. The life-entities live for ever; so that, to this extent at least, the eternal life which many of us hope for is a reality.

This is much more comprehensive than what Edison put forth in the passage, already quoted, embodying his views in 1890. A comparison will be made between Edison's views and what Mme. Blavatsky wrote, thirty-five or forty years ago, on the same subject, in *Five Years of Theosophy* ("The Transmigration of the Life-Atoms," page 340), and *The Secret Doctrine* (First and second editions: Pages 49, 85, 110, 130, 143 (footnote), 213, 223 (footnote), 224 *et seq.*, 249, 260, 267, 274 *et seq.*, and 280, Volume I. The third edition was repaged.)

These passages uphold the view that Life is the eternal, uncreated energy which finds expression in the law of continuity. The various forms under which objective things appear to us in nature—minerals, plants and animals—are the different modes in which this Life-force manifests itself. Were it inactive for a single instant, the particles would lose their cohesion and the object disintegrate; though the force would remain in each particle, in a dormant state.

A distinction is drawn between atoms that are moved by kinetic energy, which are called life-atoms, and those which contain imperceptible potential energy, the sleeping atoms. Mme. Blavatsky suggests that it is possible to awaken into activity the dormant life inherent in the so-called inorganic atoms, or, conversely, to disintegrate objects composed of these atoms; that living forms are perpetually casting off "lives" which have fulfilled their purpose; and that, after the human stage has been

reached, life-atoms can be transferred to other objective forms under the action of the will, or, at times, of emotion. It is further suggested that, in nature's workshop, the life-atoms, whether kinetic or dormant, are worked up into various forms, and pass from one to another, unless the holding power of the individual be strong enough to keep them together for evolutionary training; so that, in a literal and physical sense, we transmit our life-atoms to each other, each one of us thus being his "brother's keeper."

This process of combining and separating goes on through life-cycles of varying duration, whether it be in the objective appearance and disappearance of mineral, plant, animal and human being, or in the manifestation and withdrawal of planet, solar system or universal cosmos. "The Root of Life was in every Drop of the Ocean of Immortality. . . . Life precedes Form, and Life survives the last Atom of Form" (*The Secret Doctrine,* Volume I, p. 58).

It should be borne in mind that for the documents and Commentaries on which *The Secret Doctrine* is based, an antiquity of thousands of years is claimed.

Coming to more detailed comparison, we find that *The Secret Doctrine* fully agrees with Edison that Life is indestructible. Whatever appellation the mind of man may give to the Divine Power—whether He, or It, be called Brahma, or First Cause, or God, our finite minds can only comprehend the idea of a cause, immanent in universal nature, and manifesting as Life. And, just as the microscope has discovered an infinite number of organisms, only to have them as infinitely extended by the ultra-microscope; just as the number of the visible stars has been indefinitely extended by the development of the telescope, so all manifested life is built up of an almost infinite number of infinitesimal lives. Edison speaks of myriads, while Mme. Blavatsky takes from the Eastern books the word "Crore," a crore being ten millions; comparing the life-entities to atoms, but adding that the life-atom is to the material atom what the tiniest infusorian is to an elephant. Speaking of the electrons, Edison uses a similar comparison: the electron is to the atom what a grape-fruit is to the Woolworth building. It will, of course, be remembered that, in 1888, when *The Secret Doctrine* was written, the name "electron" was not yet in use.

The lives revealed by the microscope, the bacteria and infusoria, are themselves composed of myriads of lesser life-units or electrons; so that our bodies are built up of an enormous number of cells, or microbes, or electrons, or life-atoms, each a life in itself, and grouped together in specialized organs with functions of their own, but all working together to serve the purpose of the unified directorate, the unit man. So long as all conform to the law of harmony and obedience, the organism prospers. Disharmony brings sickness and death.

Human beings act as an assemblage, in the state or nation, but they

also tend to act as self-assertive units, ultimately to their own discomfort. The individual organs of our bodies likewise work together for the common weal. Where this united action fails, suffering and ultimate dissolution take place. If this be the law in the aggregate human body, there should be a corresponding process in the aggregate body of a nation, and of humanity.

So far, we have covered the first three points of Edison's argument. We come now to the fourth: that the life-entities build according to a plan, or replace damaged tissue from memory. With this, *The Secret Doctrine* agrees, but adds that the plan has existed from the beginning; it is the plan impressed on nature by the Universal Mind, Anima Mundi, or Alaya. This plan is carried into objective manifestation by groups of "Builders." These work under the guidance of "Architects," who, in turn, follow the plan in the Universal Mind of which they, together with the Builders, form a part. For there are many degrees of such workers, each class having its own function and intelligence, while all contribute to the fulfilment of the great Law of Life, originated as Divine Ideation and impressed on Universal Substance.

Thus, for the Builders, the cells, or the life-atoms of the body, or the still higher forces which direct the action of life in matter, there is always a plan, according to which they carry on the process of building from the beginning; or a memory, to guide the rebuilding of what has been destroyed. The "astral body," or "design body," is the mould on which the physical body is built. One may find an analogy in electro-plating; in the way in which particles of metal, drawn from a metallic solution, are deposited in all the details of the mould. If, for the mysterious electric force of the battery, we substitute the still more mysterious vital force of the semi-conscious and semi-intelligent Builders, guided by the fully conscious Architects, we have a picture of how the matter of the body is deposited on the astral mould, and made to clothe it. Or we may find another picture of the process in the experiment of Chladny's figures, where a metal plate or membrane, on which some light powder has been sprinkled, is put into vibration by a musical note, when the powder arranges itself in various patterns according to the quality of the note. A similar line of thought was followed in a work called *Geometrical Psychology,* in which the ideas of Mr. Betts are expounded by Miss Louisa Cook, who shows that the relative interferences of vibratory forces produce exquisitely graceful flower forms. So that we have a number of illustrations, showing how physical matter may take form under the stress of directing forces.

Edison's fifth point is, that ninety-five per cent of the life-atoms may be routine workers, while five per cent may be directors. *The Secret Doctrine* teaches that the Universe is guided from within outwards, both as a whole and in all its parts; and that an infinite number of semi-conscious and semi-intelligent workers, guided by fully conscious and

intelligent directors, carry the plan into execution. It is further suggested that, while the work proceeds from within outwards, human beings may co-operate in this work, making a contribution from without inwards: "Man ought to be ever striving to help the divine evolution of Ideas, by becoming to the best of his ability a co-worker with Nature in the cyclic task." These forces become more powerful, as they approach the consciousness of Unity, thus taking rank as directors of the work. Edison fancies that the directors should be located in the fold of Broca in the brain, just as Descartes thought that the soul dwelt in the pineal gland; but, surgical operations notwithstanding, this seems to us like saying that the creative work of a musician dwells in the keys of the piano or the strings of a violin, because he uses these instruments in playing.

Coming to the sixth point, *The Secret Doctrine* agrees with Edison that the life-entities are indefatigable workers. All, from the highest Architects to the lowliest Builders, are ceaselessly at work, building, conserving, or pulling down and thus transforming and regenerating the forms of nature, from those which are objective and perceptible to our ordinary senses, up to the most subtile and super-normal subjects of super-sensuous perception. So long as there is Life, there is work; and, when Life is no longer outwardly manifested, there is still Life and work, though of a kind which our finite intellects cannot comprehend. The ordinary man can distinguish one colour from another. The trained craftsman can distinguish sixty shades in each colour of the spectrum. Science considers the long series of vibrations from the slowest to the most rapid, octave after octave. But science well knows that only an octave here and there has as yet even partially been apprehended. Audible sounds stretch from the lowest note of an organ to the voice of the gnat, but there is a whole series of unexplored octaves of vibration between the highest sound vibration and the lowest light vibration, or even the heat vibrations below the red.

Science is increasingly conscious of the difficulty of drawing a line between inanimate and animate being. This brings us to Edison's seventh point. He thinks that the life-entities may work, not only in what we call living things, but also in chemical substances and minerals, directing, for instance, the symmetrical formation of crystals. On this point, *The Secret Doctrine* is quite definite, declaring that not only our own bodies and those of animals, but also plants and stones, are altogether built up of the same life-entities. The same infinitesimal, invisible lives compose the bodies of the ox and the man, the mountain and the daisy, the ant and the elephant. Each particle is, in turn, life-giving and death-giving to each particular form. By aggregation the life-entities build up universes and planets and the ephemeral vehicles ready to receive incarnating souls; and as eternally change the forms thus built up.

Coming now to the eighth point: Edison thinks that the routine

workers among the life-entities may carry on the general work of nature in various ways, and in different directions. *The Secret Doctrine* confirms this view, and distinguishes at least three classes of such Builders at work on this earth. There are (a) the purely "physical" atoms, or their smaller particles, now called electrons, which compose the crust of the earth, and supply the basis of all objective forms. Next come (b) the "lives," providing the mould or model on which the physical particles, the electrons, are deposited, and which are interblended with the physical particles, or, as it were, incarnated in them. These two classes work out the regular evolutionary process, building up the consolidating forms and "habitations" in accordance with the plan of the World-Soul, and the records carried over from the preceding planetary life-cycle. But *The Secret Doctrine* also tells of (c) a third class of Builders, who are the skilled and instructed Architects in relation to the earth; they are the evolved and perfected humanity of earlier periods of the solar Cosmos, and play a very important part in our evolution and progress. It is further suggested that, in the same way, human beings may be divided into three classes, while there are hints that further classes will be added in future circling Rounds of this planetary period.

Thus we have (a) the elemental lives which are the basis of form, guided and moulded by (b) the Builders, who provide the moulds or models upon which the first class consolidate themselves; and we have also (c) the Architects, still higher in the scale of conscious evolution, who bring to the work of the first two classes the element of universal intelligence, or Mahat. These last are the Creators, who work out the plans of divine ideation with which they are impressed, and who guide the life-entities subject to them, and under their charge. All are subject to the evolutionary law of cause and effect, the law of Karma, which they work out in every life-cycle. But the Architects, the celestial Hierarchy, reached their present high rank through orderly development; through growth, they became what they now are. And in the same way this Hierarchy will pass on, in the next life-cycle, to higher worlds, making room for a new Hierarchy, composed of the elect of mankind.

We come, finally, to the ninth point in our analysis of Edison's views: the belief that the life-entities live for ever. *The Secret Doctrine* is in full agreement with this. It teaches that there is a progressive evolution going on throughout the universe. Conscious Powers, whom we may call Dhyan Chohans, Archangels, Messengers or Planetary Spirits, are the executive agents of the universal Life. Each in their degree, they work out the plan from within outwards; and, when the human stage is reached, man should collaborate with them, making a contribution from without inwards. Conforming himself with the spirit of these guiding Powers, he should co-operate with them, in working out the universal Law. When he does this, conforming himself with the spirit of the Architects, he enters into their consciousness and shares

the eternal nature of their life. In this way he attains to a greater, wider and more powerful consciousness than that which is dimly outlined in Edison's democracy of the life-entities, routine workers and directors.

Thus *The Secret Doctrine* places its record before us. After a period of quiescence from objective activity, the cycle of activity returns. Life moves toward manifestation. And throughout the different stages of this development, in whatever direction, or on whatever plane they may appear, there is a unity, a correspondence of activity. The same Law operates in the universal Kosmos, the solar system, the planet; in mineral, plant, animal and man.

The One Life moves. From the Unmanifested Logos comes the manifested Logos, which is reflected in the collective aggregate of Planetary Spirits and nature spirits, synthesized and personified as Fohat, the primordial, vital, electric Force, which is also a conscious, intelligent Entity.

Fohat, then, is the personified, vital, electric Power, the transcendental binding unity of all cosmic energies, on the unseen, as on the manifested planes; every manifestation of that Force partaking of the nature of consciously exerted Will.

On the abstract side, there is the One Life. On the objective side, there is a septenary scale of manifestation. The one, unknown Cause, manifesting itself as omnipresent Life and Mind, is immanent in every atom of Matter.

There is a Kosmic Fohat, a unity of conscious Force, for the whole universe. There is a unity of conscious Force for each world. There are as many unities of conscious Force as there are worlds; together, they make the one universal Fohat, the Entity aspect of the one universal Non-Entity.

Fohat, the unity of conscious Force, builds the worlds in the likeness of older worlds, on the plan stored up in the Universal Mind, of which Fohat is the manifesting agent. These earlier worlds, these "older wheels," existed in former life-cycles of the universe; for the law of the birth, growth, decay and regeneration of everything is perpetually the same, whether it operate in the universe as a whole, in the solar system, in the sun or in the glow-worm. It is an everlasting progress toward perfection, whose underlying Substance and Force are for ever the same.

From the point of view of ordinary human observation, we have the objective phenomena of electricity, magnetism, light, heat, sound, cohesion, and so on, which are all the progeny of the super-sensuous activities of Fohat and its subdivisions. To these various forces *The Secret Doctrine* gives "a distinctive objective, if not material, structure, in the relatively noumenal, as opposed to the phenomenal, Universe." *The Secret Doctrine* postulates intelligent, divine workmen as the direct

cause of such forces as electricity, magnetism, light, heat, sound, cohesion, and so on, instead of regarding them as forces generated by matter, or as modes of motion. These consciously directed forces are what have been called elementals, or nature-spirits; they are the active, though, to our senses, imperceptible causes of terrestrial phenomena; and are themselves the effects of prior causes behind the veil, causes which unerringly guide their operation. Electricity, light, heat and cohesion have been called "the ghost of matter in motion;" they are super-sensuous states of matter, whose effects alone we are able to cognize.

When a planet "dies," its informing principles are transferred to a sleeping centre, possessing latent, potential energy; and this centre is thus awakened into life, and begins to form itself into a new sidereal body. It is Fohat, the parent of the infinite progeny of forces, which guides the transfer of energy from one planet to another, from an outworn star to a new child-star. And as above, so below; there is a complete correspondence of activity in regard to the building of a planet, a mineral, a plant, an animal and a man.

The Secret Doctrine postulates a collective Architect who furnishes the plan on which the hosts of intelligent Forces build the objective forms. But these objective forms are finite and perishable only in their objective manifestations, not in their ideal forms. As Ideas, they have existed from eternity and will ever exist; it is, therefore, the privilege and duty of man to apprehend these ideas and, to the best of his ability, to work for their realization, thus becoming a co-worker with Nature in the cyclic task.

Thus, between the views which Mme. Blavatsky put forward thirty-two years ago, in *The Secret Doctrine,* and, still earlier, in *The Theosophist,* and the thoughts expressed now and in the past by Edison, there is a good deal of likeness. The idea of the life-entities is common to both; but *The Secret Doctrine* further teaches the existence of many degrees of conscious, intelligent directors, ascending Hierarchies, who build up the vesture of man, and, when the times comes, inform that vesture; Hierarchies which are the builders of man and of every other form, on this world, as on every other world.

Man's freedom of will, which is imparted to him by one of these Hierarchies of celestial builders, makes it possible for him either to co-operate with them in the divine plan, or to work against them, to the confusion of the work, and to his own confusion. Where he thus acts against the universal law, he pays the penalty, and has the opportunity of learning his error and its cause.

We may, perhaps, draw to our aid Maeterlinck's happy inspiration of the "soul of the hive," guiding the community of bees. That soul may represent the collective purpose of the hive; while the separate units, the queen, the workers and the drones, carry out their specific functions in regard to the hive as a whole. A parallel may be drawn

between the bees and ourselves. When there is harmonious conformity to the soul of the hive, all goes well; where there is disobedience, confusion follows. Life is not a democracy in reality, though so many human beings think it ought to be. The soul of the hive (in our case, the divine plan), is the intelligent guide for the individual units of which it is composed; and those units must obey the direction of the soul, or else endure those transformations which lead to discord and the dissolution of the hive. So man must obey divine law, expressed by the Hierarchies of Architects and Builders, who will, in the fullness of time, "descend on radiant earth and reign over men who are themselves."

Until man realizes this, the separate personalities will be more and more subject to disease, misery and suffering. When he learns to conform to the divine law, no longer amusing himself with the illusion of his pride of place, and his assertion of his personal right to do as he pleases, it is possible that the Architects, now hidden, may reveal themselves as his leaders and guides. A. K.

We must hold this opinion of the just man, that, if he fall into poverty or disease, or any other of these seeming evils, all these things work together for good to him, either during his life, or after death. For that man is never neglected by the gods, who exerts himself to the utmost to become just, and, by practising virtue, tries to approach, as nearly as a man may, to the likeness of God.—PLATO.

Heedless, allured, one moment I forgot my goal,
A thousand years it stretched the journey of my soul.—ANON.

We must only love ourselves as for God, instead of which we are always trying, if we are not careful, only to love God for ourselves.

IGNATIUS LOYOLA.

ASPECTS OF DISCIPLINE

THE story of a man's life, which he himself told me some weeks ago, interested me greatly at the time, and has interested me still more since, in view of those things which seemed to me, upon reflection, to be behind the narrative and to extend into all life and all living. The story itself was commonplace and familiar enough. It was the history of a young man, educated, of good family, engaged to be married, employed in a confidential position in a bank in a small city; a young man of many fine qualities and of much promise, generous, and universally popular. Little by little this popularity led to minor neglects of daily duties both in the family and at business, to extravagances, finally to excesses and to dissipation, to self-indulgences of every kind, with the inevitable result, that finally he became hard-pressed financially, and saw no way out. As matters became increasingly worse, he "borrowed" money from the bank, and with the connivance of a friend, an under officer of the bank, forged several checks, meaning to return the money before the irregularity was discovered. It was, of course, discovered; the usual legal steps were taken; for business reasons the bank officer was eliminated from the proceedings, and this man was made to bear the whole brunt of the charges. He was tried and convicted, and was sent to the State prison for a term of years.

His history since that time is not the important thing, although, as a matter of fact, he has been released on parole, is working at good pay for a business man who had himself a similar experience in his youth, and his fiancée has stood by him, as have also his entire family. What concerns us at the moment are the reasons, the *real* reasons, behind the whole occurrence; the man's response to the involuntary pressure which was put upon him, with the result of this response.

Let us suppose that the real qualities of this man were not those qualities which had been evident, outwardly attractive as many of them were. Let us suppose, for instance, that his generosity, of which mention has been made, was only another expression of that self-indulgence which later manifested itself in grosser forms; that when he was in funds he liked to give money away indiscriminately, with both hands, not with the desire of relieving distress, but because of the personal pleasure it gave him to be a distributor of largesse. Generosity was perverted, turned into self-indulgence; other splendid qualities were distorted in the same way by self-will. But let us suppose that other eyes, tender and clear-seeing and full of love, looking steadfastly at those things in their real perspective, saw not only the virtues behind the perversions, but also saw in him possibilities and potentialities that he himself had never dreamed of,—graces, even, that could be developed. Let us suppose

that unseen powers had caused the utmost pressure of life to be brought to bear against his weakest points, quietly, unceasingly, unyieldingly, in order to bring him to the depths, to strip him of all that was unreal, that he might come to himself and see,—and seeing, become.

What was this particular man's response to the *involuntary discipline* which life thus imposed upon him? Far from thinking that heaven had anything to do with it, his first feeling was one of rebellion. Self was uppermost, self-pity for his hard luck, resentment that, with all his friends and his fine qualities, some way out had not been found for him, some exception made. There was nothing at first but resentment, and the wish to escape the penalty; there was no repentance.

But little by little, in the loneliness and solitude of his imprisonment, the Unseen Powers increased the pressure upon him, until his real self began in some measure to break through; until he began to have a glimmering of the purpose and meaning behind all this *involuntary discipline*. Gradually, very slowly, he came to understand that he had violated greater laws than those penal laws whose demands he was then satisfying. Help to a further understanding came to him through others, as help always comes if the desire for it, and the self-surrender, be complete enough. Little by little there dawned upon him something of the right perspective;—a realization that, in being ruled by self, he had been ruled by devils; an understanding that, in betraying his employer, his family, his friends, the Divine in himself, he had been a traitor to One to whom his heart was now turning for help. With this realization came the beginning of repentance, deep and heartfelt, and then a desire to atone, to expiate, for love's sake.

Let us take another case of *involuntary discipline,* one that goes even further and deeper. Let us suppose the case of a child afflicted for years with incurable illness, forced not only to give up the normal, happy things of youth, but driven also to the realization that life, so long as it lasted, must be renunciation and continued pain. What is such a child's response to this *involuntary discipline,* granted again that the Unseen Powers send that understanding and help which continued high courage, patience, faith, never fail to receive? It is not impossible for the child to learn that such circumstances are both a result and a preparation; that the important thing is to win on the inner plane at all costs, whatever the apparent outer giving-up may be; that beneath suffering is a purpose and a meaning, a gift. I have seen such a child, groping with infinite courage through times of darkness, come to the heart of Life, to find there not darkness, but, radiant and glorious, the Master Himself; to know, as a *fact* quite simply expressed, that at the heart of pain lie "Beauty and Truth and Christ." For a crippled child to enter so fully, here and now, into the joy of the Lord, is surely a reward that transcends expression. Impossible ever to go back, now, to a "normal" outer life, even should the clouds and shadows lift. From this point on, it must be only a question of time before a complete understanding

comes, and a final and joyous acceptance; and then for a faithful soldier and servant, life's *discipline* is no longer *involuntary,* but *voluntary:* a new *motive* has entered in.

It is interesting to note how this matter of motive enters into discipline in the Army; what widely divergent results are reached, depending upon whether the discipline imposed be involuntary or voluntary. The men who came into the Army from civil life when we entered the war, found the very antithesis of their former surroundings. For the first time, in most cases, they led a regulated life. Everything went by rule, under orders, even to the position of one's shoes under the bunk, the exact angle of the head-dress, the hour at which one was required to be in bed. They learned how to obey. They learned, also, that this new life lived in obedience was a far simpler thing than anything they had ever known before. But those who were not able to see beyond the exacted obedience to the reasons behind its exaction, utterly missed the point of the whole experience: ten chances to one they became mechanical, wooden, and lost initiative. The man who caught something of the pride in the Army as a whole, who was able to look beyond the daily life and routine and experience of his platoon, or of his company; who was able to see that his regiment was, after all, only a part of the great whole, and that the success of this whole depended upon the way in which the smallest units in it performed their task—that man was able to take Army discipline and use it with a definite purpose, and to make others use it in the same way. It was the man who voluntarily accepted Army discipline because he saw the Army as the outward expression of militant force arrayed against an evil thing, who was able, also, as many were, to treat Army discipline as a Spiritual Rule, to be glad of fatigue and hardship and suffering because it was for a Cause greater than himself;—it was this man who used his circumstances and surroundings to the uttermost, and helped others to a clearer vision and to its fuller expression. It was by no means necessary for a man to be imbued in the first place with such clear perception of the actual facts and possibilities of the situation. One saw constantly, in the Service, individuals whose motive so improved under this new *involuntary discipline* that, slowly at first, in the end completely, they accepted the discipline voluntarily, as something which they *wanted* in order to accomplish the work which they had set themselves to do.

So it must always be with the discipline which life brings to each one of us. It is involuntary at first, and, in the nature of things, resentment and rebellion ensue; our spiritual eyes are holden and we cannot see. But as the unyielding, kindly pressure persists, the perception grows that there is a spiritual harvest to be gleaned, that in every portion of life this is possible, and that one begins to be a disciple when one crosses the line between involuntary and voluntary discipline. Then we face the question as to what, exactly, we want to do, how much we want to do it, and how best we may do it.

What *does* one do when one wants with all one's heart and soul and mind and will to be a disciple, to serve, to give, to help? The will and the desire are not enough in themselves. One must *be* the things oneself. One must be trained, not only by the circumstances and surroundings of life, but by personal effort, by deliberate self-schooling in certain ways, with the help from others which will come increasingly as one earns it by strong effort, and by bearing always in one's heart and mind the deeper motive.

This is how one woman, Madame Leseur, did it. She lived in France, and died there, in 1914, at the age of forty-eight. She kept a journal in which she wrote, sometimes at long intervals, for herself alone, the thoughts and feelings and aspirations which she found in her heart. This journal is the narrative of the evolution of a soul, written in utter simplicity and humility; it is a history of "renouncement, detachment, voluntary poverty, dislike of the world, sacrifice and forgetfulness of self, acceptance of suffering." Yet, on the outer plane, this woman lived in the world, with household cares, with many social and family ties and duties, with a multitude of outer activities constantly engrossing her and demanding her attention. She was married to a husband who was without real inner life, and whom she adored with the whole of her great heart. Gay and charming, attractive in appearance, her manners were full of distinction, and she was an accomplished hostess, with a multitude of friends in the world of her day. The later years of her life were marked by constantly increasing pain and physical suffering, until the end came. Yet, living in the world, fulfilling every outer duty, meeting every active call upon her, she was not of the world, but truly lived the most intense spiritual life in an inner world of her own.

Perhaps some of the things which she herself has written will best convey the beauty and strength of her inner and outer life of discipleship; her joyous acceptance of everything, without exception, that life sent, as something to be used in her Master's service; her increasingly purified motive. Some of these are passages from her journal, some are Resolutions, some are from her Rule of Life.

"I want to re-form my life. That is, without any great exterior change or singular behaviour, to establish in my soul more serenity, true humility and charity . . . I must try to be all things to all men" (this is constantly repeated). "What we have to do is to work upon ourselves, to accomplish our own transformation—to be ourselves the things that we would have others be." "I believe there is no humble, unknown act or thought, seen by God alone, that does not serve souls. To do each day, humbly, and so that God alone may know, all the good that one can do. To strengthen my will by regular work. To do the humblest things, and thus possess the truth and beauty for which I long . . . to miss no opportunity for an act of devotion, especially if it will not be remarked. I must sacrifice, unknown to anyone, my tastes and inclinations, everything but the principles by which I live; I

must do what seems to me my duty—works of charity, devotion to others and to the poor—in a way that can hurt no one nor interfere with immediate duties. To love strongly without self-seeking, to accept by divine grace the duty of every day and hour, not neglecting the most infinitesimal."

"One resolution which I have taken, notwithstanding physical and moral weakness, is to be 'joyful' in the Christian sense of the word. And in view of a greater good, even to watch over my bearing and my dress; to make myself attractive for God's sake. To be *austere* to myself, and as *attractive* as possible to others."

"In that meditation and close contact with God, my soul gets greater strength to perform the wearisome, monotonous tasks of every day . . . To be unswervingly faithful to the daily task, in big and little things, in work, in painful inaction, in illness and suffering, as in joy and health." The enforced inaction of illness must have been, for her active spirit, a crucifixion indeed, and yet she says, "Since I believe in the Communion of Saints, I will ask God to apply to those I love the sacrifice of this inaction . . . By suffering and sacrifice I can obtain for them a transformation of life. To live is to fight and suffer and love."

"To go from the near duty to the far duty. To preach by prayer, sacrifice and example. I must be an influence, not a profession of faith. To try always to understand everyone and everything. Not to argue, but to work through contact and example. To interest myself in everyone, and to make our home a living centre, to give it a soul. To become little with the little ones, even the little of soul; to speak the tongue that they can understand."

"To be an apostle,—what a word! And what a task, impossible to perform alone. But I know well what this word 'apostle' means, and all the obligations it implies. *'By their fruits ye shall know them.'* God knows our souls thoroughly; He is aware of our least desire, the least movement of our wills. But men see only what we express outwardly. That is why our acts and words and attitude should be the faithful reflection of our souls, for men will judge God by His works in us."

"To act in spite of prostration of body and to suffer without any consolation is, perhaps, to secure what our prayer was not worthy to obtain. Only sacrifice is certain to go straight to the Heart of Jesus."

Thus did one woman live a life of discipleship. Along those same lines, it is possible for everyone who truly wishes it, to grow, to learn, to serve; to take the discipline that our own problems of the moment impose, the circumstances and surroundings of our daily lives, as being exactly what we need at this moment of time to strengthen some weak spot, to make stronger some virtue, to prepare us for the next step and for a larger work; to realize that, the harder the circumstances and the more severe the pressure, the greater the opportunity, and the greater the possible result; but not to care for the result: the weaver does not watch the finished pattern but concentrates upon each thread; it is the

effort that counts; to be thankful for the discipline of life, and to trust.

Our determined, conscious efforts with ourselves—our lower selves—must be exerted also in the little things, the things of every day; it is in these that we must school ourselves. For when a crisis comes, a man acts in accordance with the decisions he has been making over a long period of time in the innumerable little things of life, in terms of the motive which has actuated him in those little ways. There is no time to say, "Here is a crisis," to think out what must be done, to try to raise one's level of thought and motive and action, to prepare for it. One has been unconsciously preparing for it all along, and one acts instinctively in accordance with the preparation that has been going on.

So it must be in terms of our inner effort. Nothing is too small or too unimportant to use for that inner discipline which we desire, and are determined to have, although the ways and means must vary as individuals vary. Take such an apparently small thing as rising every morning half-an-hour earlier in order to have time for reading and meditation: try it and see whether or not it is easy under all circumstances to persevere in it, day in and day out. Then too, the average person instinctively singles out and sinks into the most comfortable chair in the room; try habitually taking a straight-backed chair, and sitting straight. Almost ridiculous, such things, it may seem; but remember the motive with which they are done, that they are only for God to know and to see, as Madame Leseur believed. They are offerings to Him.

With these and other ways of inner self-discipline, the limits of our horizon are extended, our perspective is enlarged. In response to our effort and aspiration, the spiritual help which we receive is increased, until it may become like the turning of the full force of a torrent into a narrow mountain pass, causing the detritus and rubble of our faults and weaknesses to be washed away by the flow, the excrescences of our sins worn off, and the channel of the torrent made smoother and deeper. We must not merely accept; we must look actively for the means, calling on every quality within that may enable us to see and to see truly, asking help from the Companions around and above us. The help is there for the asking; and the Way will be made more and more clear to the seeing eye and the understanding heart. For we have been told the Way:—"If any man would come after me let him take up his Cross daily, and follow me."

The little things of each day are a divine gift to us: through the right use of them may be attained that poverty of spirit which desires to renounce in order to possess all; which finds, in freedom from the material and from the things of the world, freedom also to look within, to seek and to keep seeking, and more and more fully to possess the Divine. And, having looked and found within, to find the Divine in all the circumstances of life without exception, and in the hearts and lives of all others as well. Then we may enter fully, here and now, into the Kingdom.

STUART DUDLEY.

AKHNATON THE "HERETIC" PHARAOH OF EGYPT

I

The Old Kingdom

IF we wish to grasp the true significance of Akhnaton, it becomes necessary to take a slight survey of the historical, political and religious events which preceded his reign. As will be seen later, Akhnaton can hardly be called a product of his times; indeed he presents so startling a contrast to all that goes before, he stands out so boldly even against the highly coloured background formed by the vivid and varied personalities, particularly of his immediate predecessors, that he has sometimes been called the first *individual* in history. In letting our thoughts range over a period of thousands of years before Akhnaton's time, it is difficult to make a wise choice of the salient points, because nothing that took place in Egypt is unimportant. The least happening or thought, traced to its source, will be found to stand on a vast foundation of hidden truth. This has so long been recognized that it has become almost proverbial, and it seems scarcely necessary to draw attention to it now.

In looking back, therefore, to the earliest records which human history has thus far vouchsafed us, we see glimmering through the mists, which half hide but which cannot wholly conceal them, the colossal forms of the Creators and Rulers of earliest Egypt, but so comparatively little is known of them as men that we must be content, in so brief a sketch as this, to leave them in their majestic isolation, dwelling of necessity more on what they accomplished, than on what they were. In that earliest time, in the very dawn of recorded history as we know it today, the Pharaoh occupied the most exalted position which it would be possible to imagine, mixing little with his subjects in general, and, though working unremittingly for the good of his kingdom, being surrounded by an impenetrable veil of mystery. He was almost literally worshipped by his people, to whom he was known as the "good god", their deep respect and reverence making them reluctant so much as to refer to him by name. Even to his courtiers he was known as "one", and official reports sent to the King were impersonally entitled "to let one know." Indeed, he was so completely supreme that he, as a result, represented in his sacred person all things, both religious and civil. He was chief worshipper in the temples, the intermediary between the people and their God, and while, at first, only the central offices of the state administration were known as the "great house", gradually this became one of the august titles given to the King himself, and the words "Great House", in Egyptian *Per-aa* or *Per-o,* have come down to us as Pharaoh.

We shall see how, little by little, as time moves on, the Pharaoh becomes more human, more accessible, in fact more democratic, and that while, up to the very end, the mystery of Divinity clings to him, still more and more is he known personally to his people, takes part personally in their activities, becomes more the approachable human being.

The Pharaoh of the Old Kingdom and his court, and even the life of the people, lives for us again in the splendid art of that time, an art which never afterwards in Egypt reached a higher level. Just as hardly anything in Egyptian architecture of a later date strikes us with more solemn awe than do the pyramids, so, in no later art of Egypt, do we find the stupendous force, the majesty and power, that we see in the Old Kingdom statues and reliefs. When we look at the diorite statue of Khafra, or the minute carved ivory head and bust of Khufu (better known as Kheops) with its fiery intensity, its almost cosmic energy, so unsurpassingly expressed in so small a compass, we know that we are looking on a monarch who in all reality ruled by Divine Right. The statue of Khafra is one of the grandest works of art of all time, and, as in the case of all good portraiture, we know, in both these examples, that these *are* portraits and not ideas in stone. And the nobles and courtiers of that wonderful period have caught a spark of the Divine Fire, have been illumined by the teaching of their Mighty Rulers. One has but to look at the magnificent carved wooden panel of Rahesy, a high official of the IIIrd. Dynasty, the seated statues of Rahotep and his wife Nefert (also IIIrd. Dynasty), or the mortuary statue of Ranofer, a noble of the Vth. Dynasty, to realize that these men "talked with God." Their superb assurance, their majestic bearing, make them fit companions for the Great Lord, the Pharaoh.

The temple was quite literally the House of God, and the local noble was at the head of the priests of his community. But his duties as priest were not actually a vocation, for he continued his worldly duties as well as fulfilling those of the temple. Religion was so intimately bound up with daily life and routine in those pure early days, that this was not only a perfectly natural but equally possible arrangement. The Pharaoh, as supreme sacerdotal head, was represented in every temple in the land by a High Priest, who made offerings for the "life, prosperity and health" of the King. Some of the High Priesthoods were especially ancient, that of Heliopolis in particular, whose High Priest was known as the "Great Seer". Grain, wine, oil, honey were brought and reverently placed in the temple as offerings to the God, and the temple ritual was simple and devout, suiting the sincerity of the times.

We find a loftiness and grandeur in the religion of this early world which is what we should expect, knowing that Egypt was ruled by a line of King Initiates, and it is significant that the Egyptians "emerge into historical times—with an ancient religion of vastly remote prehistoric origin." [1] To the Theosophist such a statement is no surprise, nor is it

[1] Breasted's *History of Egypt.*

even new, for he knows about that far Atlantean world from which earliest Egypt sprang, and from the wreck of which were saved the secrets of the Ancient Wisdom. Religion plays such a large part in the life of ancient man, that, if we wish to understand him at all, we must try to understand and sympathise with his religious beliefs. It is our surest, we might say our only means of comprehending him. But as in all religion, and perhaps almost more so in Egypt than elsewhere,—we must never forget to look for origins and real meanings, which are invariably hidden under a thick outer coat of cult and ritual. Unless we keep this clearly and unceasingly before us, we lose our way in an intricate and paralysing maze of detail. We can imagine that those Great Initiates, those early Pharaohs, had to give vast truths to the masses in such symbolic forms as the average could understand and accept, and, as is the fate of all symbols if they fall into ignorant hands, they gradually assumed meanings which were never originally intended, and in the end appear so distorted as to be hardly recognizable.

Therefore when we speak of Sun Worship and of Ra as the Sun God, thereby, perhaps involuntarily, calling up mental pictures of strange ceremonial customs and of Ra as a not always very admirable deity, we are speaking from the outer point of view. But when we stumble on the popular and deep-rooted belief that, in long ages before, Ra had been the first King of Egypt; when we begin to realize that all great and holy things dated from Ra, as is indicated in the popular saying (when referring to some unusual event), "The like has not happened since the time of Ra"; when we realize as we look deeper than ceremonial rites and extravagant ritual that it was Ra who exacted pure living and clean thinking,—we have in fact stumbled on a simple, undistorted reality; we have followed the stream back to its clear source, and are certain that Ra was in very truth the earliest Divine Ruler (Theosophists would believe him to have belonged to the Great White Lodge), whose wisdom, goodness and justice still echo down to us after these countless thousands of years. Contrary to what most of our folk-lore experts would have us believe, we know that Ra was not the creation of man's imagination, typifying the sun as a force in nature. Quite the opposite: the Sun in all its splendour typified Ra the Divine; the Sun was his insignia of Divinity. Even the spot where Ra dwelt was from hoariest antiquity held sacred. This was An in the Delta, the On of the Hebrews. Later, the Greeks, knowing it to be the centre of Sun Worship, called it Heliopolis, the name by which we now know it. There, throughout the ages, were temples and monuments dedicated to the Sun. Today only one obelisk, dating from the XIIth. Dynasty, has been recovered. But there are, fortunately, records which last longer than monuments built by human hands, and these are the sanctuaries erected in the heart, those memories kept holy and ever fresh because of the continued and loving recollection of the beloved. Thus the "legends" which cling to the "Sacred Spring of Ra" at Heliopolis, where the Divine King was wont to bathe and refresh himself, have out-

lived the granite temples built for his worship; and thus even the modern Arabs, little knowing why, still speak of it as the "Spring of the Sun." It is here that Mary is said to have halted during "The Flight", and it is here that the Holy Child was bathed and refreshed. Botanists tell us that on the margin of this "Sacred Spring" there grows today a plant which is found nowhere else in all the world. Even the intrusion of the beautiful Osirian faith, while taking the strongest hold on the religious impulses of the people (for Osiris was deeply loved, and was called *Unnefer,* "The Good Being"), never really weakened the position of Ra, who was spoken of as "The Limitless One", as he who existed "before the pillars of the sky were made", and who continued to be thought of as the Father of Egypt up to the last.[2]

A few words should be said about certain aspects of Ra, because of the importance given to at least one of them by Akhnaton, some two thousand years later than the Old Kingdom times of which we have been writing. But it should be remembered that we are not writing on Sun Worship in general, and that Sun Worship is so tremendous a subject that we are only attempting to jot down points to serve as sign-posts, indicating a few of the roads which may be followed by anyone seeking further knowledge.

Ra had many aspects. In the earliest Sun Hymn which we know, we read:

> Hail to Thee Atum!
> Hail to Thee Kheper!
> Who Himself became (Self Generator).[3]

Atum (or Atmu, Tum or Tmu) was Ra in the West, the Setting Sun, the Aged Sun, the All-Wise, the All-Knowing. Kheper (or Khepr

[2] This statement might be questioned by some Egyptologists who declare that not only is there much evidence to show that Osiris antedated Ra, but that his worship certainly lasted into later times—Osiris being the "Great God" during the Greek period in Egypt, when Ra was almost forgotten. It is a much disputed question, but on one side of it there is never any disagreement. The worship of Ra was always the State Religion, the religion of the Pharaoh. The Pharoah himself belonged to the Solar Race and was believed to be the incarnation of the Sun God. (This, however, is not to be confused with the identification of the deceased with Osiris after death, which is quite a different matter.) Ra belonged to the Throne, Osiris more to the people. Therefore, as Egypt through the ages became more externalized, Ra might well have withdrawn, have become more and more hidden, but by no means forgotten by the chosen few, who remained true to the ancient faith; while Osiris, easier to understand, because more essentially human, should have become better known to the masses. Erman says that "up to the *latest times* the priests of On (Heliopolis) were credited with the possession of great wisdom." There can be little doubt that it was they, especially, who guarded the mysteries of the Secret Doctrine long after all outer forms and records had been forgotten or destroyed. Had Herodotus, Strabo and others relied, for their information, on written records alone, many, if not the greater part of the most valuable facts, religious and otherwise, which we learn from them, might still remain hidden treasures.

Regarding the question as to the relative ages of Ra and Osiris, Wiedemann says: "Ra was regarded by the Egyptians not only as the Sun God, but also as the first King of Egypt. In early times the people seem to have held this conception with a fixity which no theological attempts of the priests to set other deities higher in the pantheon could shake. Not until later times did he yield his place in popular favor to Osiris, the archetype of Egyptian kings; nor even then was he altogether deposed, but while Osiris was supposed to have ruled as a man over men only, the dominion of Ra was relegated to a time when Gods still sojourned among men, and Ra bore rule over both."

[3] Wiedemann's translation.

or Khepera, represented by the scarabaeus) was Ra in the East, the Rising Sun, typifying Energy and Growth (though not in the sense of fertility)—"He who was Becoming." Ra, represented by the Solar Orb itself,[4] but that Orb as the *outer form,* not as the *Self* of the God, was the Sun in the Zenith, typifying Majesty, the Lord of Infinity, the All-Powerful. In a Turin papyrus (which, indeed, is XXth. Dynasty, but which may serve as example, as it is a late record of earliest times), we find the legend of Ra and Isis. Ra speaks, saying: "I made the Heaven, and the secret of both Horizons . . . I am Khepera in the Morning, Ra at Noon and Tum in the Evening."

Ra Horakti,[5] or Horus of the Two Horizons, is the aspect of the Sun God which we must bear especially in mind, for it was this aspect which was emphasized by Akhnaton. Horakti, "The Great God, the Lord of Heaven, Ra Horakti", was the Horizon of the East *and* of the West, Ra both at his Rising and at his Setting, symbolizing a Manvantara, a Day of Ra.

There is much disagreement as to when Sun Worship first came into Egypt. Petrie believes that it was brought in by the IInd. Pre-Dynastic people, and that the Priestly Line of the Vth. Dynasty were their descendants. It is evident that the line of Khufu, IVth. Dynasty, was replaced by a Dynasty of Kings all of whom bore the proud title "Son of the Sun", which forever after was one of the names taken by the reigning Pharaoh. In Hordedef's Tale,[6] we read how the wife of the Priest of Ra became the mother of Ra's three children, and that these were the first three Kings of the Vth. Dynasty, the first three "Sons of Ra". Breasted, however, thinks that this title was probably "not unknown earlier". In any case, whether the title "Son of the Sun" antedates the Vth. Dynasty or not, we know, at least, that Ra and that Sun Worship can be traced back to hoariest times.

We have spoken of the grandeur of this early religion. An objection is often made that the Pyramid Texts are written for the use of the Pharaoh only, but if this appears to be so, it is because, as we have seen, the Pharaoh represented within himself all aspects within the life of that time, particularly of religion, as though, through him alone, humanity could reach out and grasp immortality. If we look deeper, however, we find that the future state of the private individual was absolutely dependent on the quality of his own life lived on earth, he alone was responsible for his own acts; and while the Pyramid Texts are full

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[4] It is probably hardly necessary to remind the reader of what he undoubtedly already knows,—that the hieroglyphic sign for Ra is the circle with the central point, the meaning of which is so brilliantly explained in the very opening pages of *The Secret Doctrine.* We also find this sign incorporated in many words implying the action of the sun, such as:—shu=dry, heru=day, rek=time, neheh=eternity, etc., etc. In detailed hieroglyphs, Ra is represented by two concentric circles, the inner one red, the outer yellow. When Ra is represented anthropomorphically, he carries on his head the Solar Disc, the circumference of which is indicated by the Royal Uraeus, the Sacred Serpent.

[5] The Harmarkis of the Greeks.

[6] *Egyptian Tales,* translated by W. M. Flinders Petrie, and *Contes Populaires,* translated by Maspero.

of protective magical formulæ, these were practically never perverted or used as a screen for wrong doing, as they were in later times. Charms, indeed, there were to shield the defenceless, newly deceased, from the dangers of the next world, a world to which the newly dead was not yet accustomed; but unless it could be said of him that "he is righteous before heaven and earth", or that "there is no evil which he has done", he could not be admitted to a happy hereafter. Only those who were morally fit, who had filled all their obligations, both social and religious, were acceptable. A man must "win immortality by the purity of his own soul."

There is a beauty of expression, a majesty of thought in the Pyramid Texts, which it would be hard to rival. Death is not the end of things, rather is it a beginning; the "dead" do not die, they pass on into a fuller life. Thus: "King Teti is not dead, he has joined the immortals, the dwellers of the Horizon"; and, "No! King Unis, thou didst not depart in death, thou didst depart to life immortal." Or again: "Oh Lofty One among the imperishable stars, thou perishest not eternally." "Ere ever the heavens were, King Pepi was. Ere ever the earth was made, King Pepi was. King Pepi lived before man was created, before the gods were born, before death itself was known . . . King Pepi is not dead,—death comes not nigh King Pepi, who is eternal in the heavens. Oh Ra, hold out thy hand to King Pepi! Oh Mighty God, stretch towards King Pepi thy royal sceptre, that he may live and flourish forever!" Later: "Oh King Pepi! it is life itself which comes to thee, not death. Glory is thine, even among those Shining Ones, and thou art greatest among the living [meaning the "dead" who have reached immortal life]. Thou art mighty, power has been given thee. Thy will is supreme,—come what may, thou art invincible."

Among the very earliest of the texts we find the following:

> Oh Thou Quiet Watcher, watching in peace! Oh Thou Divine Boatman! . . . King Unis has come to thee. Carry him in thy Boat to the place where dwell the gods. For King Unis has come as a god to his own place . . . King Unis has conquered life, King Unis has conquered death, King Unis has conquered fear . . . If thou refusest passage to King Unis, behold he will mount upon the wings of Thoth,[7] and thus will he reach the Horizon, and the place which awaits him there.

And how can we imagine a more royal "passing" than this, also among the earliest of the texts:

> Clouds darken the sky,
> The stars rain down,
> The bows (a constellation) stagger,
> The bones of the hell hounds tremble,
> The porters are silent
> When they see King Unis
> Dawning as a soul.[8]

[7] In reading this, one's mind inevitably reverts to the "Great Bird" spoken of in *The Voice of the Silence:* "Bestride the Bird of Life, if thou wouldst know."

[8] Breasted's translation.

II

The Middle Kingdom

One wonders how, after reaching such lofty heights as this, it was possible for a people to fall again into chaos. But human progress moves in cycles, as we know, and mankind, despite its long line of Mighty Kings, must gradually have become too corrupt to follow their guidance; and we can only fancy that the Dynasty of Great Initiates was withdrawn from active life, for, with the downfall of the Old Kingdom, Egypt entered on a long period of darkness and disorder. During this time there was undoubtedly much abuse by those who had seized on the helm of state,[1] for when we again pick up the threads of history, we find that the Pharaoh is no longer unquestionably supreme; a powerful provincial society has sprung up, as though in protest against the centralization of control in unworthy hands. The nobles have now to be reckoned with. The Middle Kingdom is the Feudal Age of Egypt, and we realize how changed are the times when we read the bold statement made by one of the feudatory lords: "I rescued my city in the day of violence from the terrors of the Royal House." Gradually, however, with a firm hand to take again the direction of affairs, a new and splendid era set in which is known as the Classic Period; an era when literature thrives as never before and rarely after, when art finds expression in new and lovely forms, when religion, though somewhat altered and more complex, has still retained most of its early purity. It is the time of the Amenemhats and the Senuserts, a thoughtful and beauty loving age.

The men of the Middle Kingdom may be said to be more introspective than those of the Old Kingdom, and perhaps more self-conscious. Certainly they were less magnificently rugged, less simply direct. We sense this at once in much of the art of the XIIth. Dynasty, which has a grace of line, a delicacy, which we did not find during the earlier period. A good part of this is, however, it seems to us, somewhat inferior, because less superbly spontaneous,—except, indeed, for certain striking exceptions, such as some of the splendid portrait statues, and all of the jewelry belonging to the women of the Royal Household. This, for faultless taste and incredible delicacy, is quite unequalled. It makes us realize the high tide of culture to which Egypt has again attained, culture which would seem, perhaps, to have smoothed away many of the old forceful angles. It thus also makes us wonder if some of the old time virility is gone; but we recognize, in looking closer, that the force is still there though flowing in wider channels, so that the strength of the current is less evident. The Egyptian world had expanded; new interests had sprung

[1] Recent excavations by Professor Petrie (1920-1921) in a IXth. Dynasty cemetery at Heracleopolis, show the evident hatred of the Egyptians for those in power. To quote from the most recent account: "The IXth. Dynasty was the chief period of this cemetery, as the city was the capital of that age . . . Hundreds of tombs were opened, but most of them had been maliciously attacked, and the bodies entirely removed or burnt. This shows a detestation felt for the invaders,"—the usurpers of power.

up. At home the State was represented somewhat more by an aggregate of individuals than by one powerful central force. Abroad, fresh conquests in Nubia and Syria had widened the horizon, and new influences from Asia Minor and the far Aegean were felt. The pure white ray of completely united effort, in the world of the Old Kingdom, had passed through the prism of the more diverse life of the Middle Kingdom, and had been split up into an intricate blaze of colour and beauty.

Ra, however, was still supreme. He had held his own even against the lovable Osiris,—though this is true somewhat in the official sense, for Osiris had taken a firm hold on the affections of the people. But so great was the power of Ra that he accomplished what the Pharaoh of the Old Kingdom had done: he absorbed into his Divine Person all lesser lights. Though the temples were larger and richer than they had been in the days of the Old Kingdom, there was still no very large class of priests (though such a class did exist); and in great measure, as in those early days, the local noble combined his religious with his civic duties, so that it was an entirely natural result of the growing power of the nobles that many local divinities should have sprung up, for each nome had its local god, its great man, its hero; and, as we are told in *Isis Unveiled,* "Eminent men were called gods by the ancients." It follows that in order to assure the life of the local deity, it was only necessary to discover in him some attribute in common with Ra, this attribute being, of course, his character as Sun God. An ambitious priesthood soon accomplished this metamorphosis, the usual method being that the name of the Great God was tacked on to the name of the lesser god, thus signifying that Ra had taken him under his protection.

The chief example of this arbitrary fusion of deities, the one at least which had the most far-reaching consequences, was that of Amen, a hitherto quite unimportant god of Thebes, who was suddenly discovered to be in reality a solar god, and, with Ra's august name attached, he unexpectedly burst into some prominence as Amen-Ra. This was no doubt the combined work of the priests of Amen and of the nobles of that particular city; also it was, in great measure, a result of the growing importance of Thebes as a political centre. We can see, on the one hand, what a mine of evil possibilities was thus opened up to a future unscrupulous priesthood; while, on the other hand, Breasted points out that "there were in this movement the beginnings of a tendency toward a pantheistic solar monotheism", and we shall see how, many centuries later, Akhnaton, by his wide, unhampered vision, his intense singleness of purpose, and his indomitable will, forcing to one side the evil priestly influences, brought this tendency to its final and glorious fruition.

We have said that the men of the Middle Kingdom were more introspective than their predecessors. We find this in the literature of the period, which we might divide into two parts, that immediately preceding the restoration of order, and that when the Middle Kingdom was at its height. While their belief in immortality was really just as firm, they

wondered and speculated more about the life hereafter. They swept their eyes over the thousand years since the Pyramid Age; they saw in the sixty miles of tombs and mortuary temples along the margin of the western desert (tombs which had already repeatedly suffered at the hands of the despoiler), what seemed to them the melancholy evidence of the futile struggle of their ancestors with death, and a great wistfulness filled their souls, and the eternal questions, "Why?" "Whither?" arose in their hearts. Fragments of a Song of Mourning, possibly partly a funeral dirge, have come down to us in a deep sigh of yearning across the ages:

How prosperous is this good Prince!
It is a goodly destiny that the bodies diminish,
Passing away while others remain,
Since the time of the ancestors,
The gods who were aforetime,
Who rest in their pyramids,
Nobles and the glorious departed likewise,
Entombed in their pyramids.
Those who built their (tomb) temples,
Their place is no more.
Behold what is done therein.
I have heard the words of Imhotep and Hardedef,[2]
(Words) greatly celebrated as their utterances.
Behold the places thereof;
Their walls are dismantled,
Their places are no more,
As if they had never been.

None cometh from thence
That he may tell (us) how they fare;
That he may tell (us) of their fortunes,
That he may content our heart,
Until we (too) depart
To the place whither they have gone.

As a reaction from this despondency the singer then weakly advises forgetfulness, and much emphasis is laid on the joys of the life of this world, since we cannot be sure of the peculiar nature of our fate in the next.

Encourage thy heart to forget it,
Making it pleasant for thee to follow thy desire,
While thou livest,

sings this false counsellor:

Put myrrh upon thy head,
And garments on thee of fine linen,
Imbued with marvellous luxuries,
The genuine things of the gods.

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[2] Two Wise Men of the Old Kingdom.

Increase yet more thy delights,
And let (not) thy heart languish.
Follow thy desire and thy good,
Fashion thy affairs on earth
After the mandates of thine (own) heart.
Till that day of lamentation cometh to thee,
When the silent-hearted hears not their lamentation,
Nor he that is in the tomb attends the mourning.

Celebrate the glad day,
Be not weary therein.
Lo, no man taketh his goods with him.
Yea, none returneth again that is gone thither.[3]

The song of this Ancient Harper, probably written in the days just before order was brought out of chaos, offers no real solution for the doubts which are troubling him; and his song ends, as it began, with an unanswered question. But we cannot agree with some commentators on this period, who find in it, as well as in other (contemporary) documents, a full-blown scepticism, which they declare indicative of the times. Ineffective as a philosophy of life it certainly is, but ineffective chiefly because it is the product of a mind numbed and befogged by a long night of sinister dreams;—not of a mind worn out and exhausted, so much as of one only partially re-awakened. This man's immediate ancestors had lost the inner light which illumined the men of the Old Kingdom, and he is painfully coming to life again; slowly, perhaps quite unconsciously, trying to grope his way back to their position. A markedly deep veneration for the past, alone shows this. The men of this time did not deny the possibility of attaining knowledge, they were sadly conscious only of their own inability to reach it, which is a standpoint very far removed from real scepticism. (In saying this we are naturally speaking of a philosophical temper or mood, not of reasoned or systematic philosophy, for actual schools of philosophy, so far as we know, did not exist in Egypt till a very late date.) It has been said that "subjectivism usually ends in scepticism", but these men were not at the *end* of their subjective selves, as were the philosophers of the Post-Aristotelian schools in the Greece of a later age, rather were they barely at the beginning, and they therefore never reached anything as effete as scepticism. Pessimism, yes,—but pessimism is usually a sign of immaturity, and it is certainly so in this case. This was not the product of a decaying civilization, as was the case in Greece; rather was it the dawning self-consciousness which was the fore-runner of a most brilliant and enlightened era. Whether they may have been heading toward eventual scepticism or not we cannot say; fortunately for them, other and healthier influences poured in and swept them into a more constructive current of thought,—as we shall see presently.

HETEP EN NETER.

(To be continued)

[3] Breasted's translation.

PRODIGAL SONS

THERE is a certain horrible dream which seems to be the common property of the race. In it you find yourself, inadequately or ridiculously clad, moving through shocked throngs of friends or strangers, some of whom appear to have a keen sense of humour, though your own is in abeyance. You have no reason or excuse—you are simply there—and you drift miserably about, your dreaming fancy occupied with your supposed effect upon those you meet. It is a dream uncannily daunting and disagreeable—a sort of foretaste of what it might mean to enter in "not having on a wedding garment."

This dream has some queer counterparts in waking life. The sense of the fitness of the wedding garment is ingrained in us, and not even the most obstreperous radical shall escape. Where earthly potentates are concerned, our observances must be iron-clad in their strictness, however casual we may be toward the spiritual powers and principalities.

Once, in a European city, the writer spent an afternoon of entertainment it would have been tragedy to miss, watching the mad cavortings of the democrat when bidden by royalty. The King ("that absurd relic of medieval darkness") was giving audience to a number of foreign physicians, and the cards of invitation read "full dress obligatory." The hour being three o'clock in the afternoon, some, unused to European ceremonial, chose to translate this as permitting black ties, but on presenting themselves at the palace they found a Court Chamberlain adamantine as the St. Peter of ribald story. Then for a crowded quarter of an hour the air of the city thrummed with passion; cabs dashed hither and yon, the windows blocked with distracted scientific heads looking for haberdashers; noted surgeons returned to their hotels in dog-trots, with white set faces, to re-array themselves; clinicians of world-wide repute burst in on astounded wives who had thought to be quit of them, with explosive and cryptic remarks, such as "givmeawhitetiequick!"; men who were irritatedly convinced that royalty should be wiped off the face of the earth as a silly anachronism said, "hang it all, we shall *miss* it!"; and all of them, in the eyes of their amused but helpful womenkind, turned into little frantic boys, as big men will in small crises. It was to laugh to see such a storm in a teacup, but, laughter sated, here was material for meditation.

At what risk does man maintain his puny indisciplines in a world so accurately preadjusted that the mystery of colours, among other mysteries, underlies its apparent topsyturviness, and where the mandate "let all things be done decently and in order" rules spheres and neckties alike. *The King said, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment. And the man was speechless.*

What does it mean to have on a wedding garment? What relation does repentance bear to that meaning? Those doctors repented—they wanted so much to meet a king, that they accepted the king's conditions. So did the Prodigal Son. He did not arise and turn home because his money had given out, or because he was tired of cheap boarding houses, as some people seem to think; but because he was homesick to death for his Father, and could not stand it another minute.

The Father ran to meet him—it takes two to make a good repentance: a father and a son. The son brings his change of direction, his broken heart, the careful eagerness of his retracing steps; and the Father furnishes everything else—the exultant passion of welcome, the tumult of rejoicing, the feast, the wedding garment, and the ring.

It is not easy to travel back from that "far country." *Light on the Path* says: "the heart will bleed, and the whole life of the man seem to be utterly dissolved." If we turn to the great Scriptures, Krishna, through all his tonic rallying of Arjuna's spiritual forces, does not minimize the difficulties. The Master Christ tells us that the way is strait and narrow and "few there be that find it." He brought "not peace, but a sword," with which we must slash ourselves free from *maya,* though flesh and blood go with it, and the power of that tangling web is recognized so clearly in Heaven that there is joy there when one sinner repents. Then the angels—those creatures of enduring joy—greet each other with soft laughter and say, "Our Lord has one more lover."

The Prodigal Son was not a hardened criminal. He had not said, "Evil, be thou my good." He was just—well, he was just me, and you, and you—a delighted lingerer in psychic illusion. The world is God's prodigal son. While the substance lasted from which he spun his shining dream, he asked no more; he had what many prodigal sons have called "a hell of a good time," intending thereby only a blasphemous hyperbole, but achieving the bleakest realism. He was given the desire of his heart and did not perceive that to it was graciously added "leanness to his soul withal," till by-and-by the dream wore thin, wore thinner, turned into a nightmare of swinish horror, and he was mercifully shocked awake.

Repentance, then, is a terrific thing to put in train and carry through. It is a gift; it is an act; it is a state. In its gift aspect, vast forces of which we can form no conception are working overtime to bring it about. These forces intend our unconditional surrender to the Heart Doctrine. "Great Sifter, O Disciple, is the name of the Heart Doctrine."

Though its outward expression may be sudden, repentance is usually gradual in its growth. The prayer of man that he "be granted true repentance," is answered with homeopathic caution, and God's reticence as to His vision of us, veils us with shielding pity. This might suggest that we are asking for a drastic and devastating experience of which we can endure but little at a time—only a faint percussion through that "thick wadding of stupidity" in which a great writer has said the wisest of us dwell, swaddled for our comfort. Full conviction of sin

would be like being struck by lightning. Our self-love shrinks from "the queer, unpleasant, disturbing touch of the Kingdom of Heaven". The trouble is it shrinks from the least, most infinitesimal touch, and thousands even of those who punctually repeat their *mea culpa,* adroitly practise this mad evasion, until their lives cry out for the lightning. Their time has not yet come; it may not come till after many days, and it may in tempered degree be granted to some rum-soaked derelict at the corner Mission to-night, for the wind of the Spirit bloweth where it listeth.

Perhaps we use this word of mighty meanings too casually. Perhaps we often mean that lesser thing—contrition—the bruised sense of our shortcomings that may persist for long before we arise and repent. It is possible to indulge one's self in varying degrees of contrition without getting much forwarder. When the physical body is constantly bruised, it hardens itself and forms callosities for its protection:—perhaps the inner nature does the same? St. Paul congratulates his penitents that they "sorrowed after a godly sort," leading on to repentance. Contrition indulged in as a sporadic mood, without leading on to repentance, may both harden and delay; but *after* repentance it is without doubt the habit in which the soul permanently clothes herself. Surely the prodigal son went softly all his days.

There are masquerading elementals which pose for this grace. We know what it is to loathe consequences, to cringe before suspicion, to despair at being found out. We have said "I'm sorry now," like three-year olds tired of the corner. We may even perhaps have repented—a little—with "a penitence too tardy, and too tepid, and too brief"—poised for the turn, "almost persuaded". If we happen to be church goers, we often all-too-easily concede that "we have erred and strayed like lost sheep." A penitential confession in concert is not difficult—all *we* like sheep—those on the other side of the aisle, these kneeling in the pew beside us, even the priest himself. It does not seem so dreadful—just a lot of silly sheep. Presently the priest will turn to us and make all right again; he will remind us that "God desireth not the death of a sinner" (*there* we pin our idle faith), but "rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live" (just what we planned to do some Monday), and "therefore He pardoneth and absolveth",—we almost feel the burden slip, and, lulled by beauty, we miss the awful key words "all those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe". There is no least hint that He meets at this moment any other than repentant sinners, and mere boredom at our own pertinacity in sin is not a credential. "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (*that* writer did not shrink from tautology). How near is the heart to breaking? As near as when that projected pleasure miscarried? As near as when the dog died? Not thus do we turn and go "like athletes, striding across the wilderness of our desires," not for this will Heaven's streets thrill with golden-throated laughter.

Nevertheless, God be praised! there may be found an Altar here and there where penitents bow down before a living and realized Christ, where love's heartbroken compunction can be felt thrilling through the ranks like wind through corn, and where absolution is a living thing transmitted.

Students of Theosophy are of many types, and some may find boresome this insistence upon the need of repentance, their attitude being that they have turned to Theosophy as a welcome escape from the minutiæ that wearied them in religion—as a man might say he had turned to meat as a substitute for beef. It is possible they are making a mistake, and that their reappearance under the Christian dispensation, which places such stress on the need for repentance, is a hint that they have much of it to do. Although not officially adjured to repent, it is perhaps taken for granted that he has come in through that door, and he is now advised to carry on and not waste time crying over spilt milk. And yet repentance is of the essence of every implication granted him. Perhaps our attitude toward the paradox—if paradox there be—is the measure of our halting or our advance.

Those who can content themselves with the Eye doctrine, may escape this sense that the toilet of the soul must be made ere the wedding garment can be donned, for they are not bound for the inner temple. It is otherwise with those who are for the Heart doctrine, that plunge into a grand passion with all its penalties and privileges. He who said "My son, give me thy heart," preserved a significant silence as to those heads of which we have so good a conceit. So when one tells us he has no time to waste in mourning for the past, the words are true enough in their way, and very true in their place, but love speaks another language.

There would appear to be a seemly sequence in the progress of the soul toward union, which we ignore or discard at our peril. Not only the so-called theosophical books, but the experience of the saints (advanced theosophists who had never heard the word), the ordered devotions of the rituals (built up by theosophists who would have died of the accusation), and our own secret spiritual intimations, make frank disclosure of this sequence if we will but attend. "I fling my past behind me" is love's second speech, not its first. Love says, "I have sinned against Heaven and in Thy sight, and am not worthy to be called Thy son." Love holds out its past in both hands as a broken-hearted baby holds a broken doll.

"Trembling one, pursued by guilt,
Dash thyself against the bosom of thy God!"

L. S.

TAO-TEH-KING

An Interpretation of Lao Tse's Book of the Way and of Righteousness.

III.

17. *In the highest degree, men know only that they have rulers.*
In the second degree, they love and praise their rulers.
In the third degree, they fear them.
In the fourth degree, they despise them.
When the rulers lose faith in the Way, the people lose faith in their rulers.
The first rulers are guarded and reticent. While they fulfil their task and complete their work, the people say: We follow our nature.

IT would seem that the first four sentences may mean either four degrees of excellence, or the four traditional ages: of gold, silver, bronze and iron; in the last of which we are.

But the meaning is exactly the same. The kings of the golden age were kings of the highest degree; the King-Initiates of tradition, who led each man along the path of his own soul, inwardly co-operating with the soul. The will of the Higher Self and the will of the Master are one.

Rulers of the second degree, no longer ministering inwardly to the soul, seek to gain admiration through gifts and benefits. And so through the four degrees. Exactly the same thing might be said of churches, or of men, or of women.

18. *When the Way was no longer followed, humanity and justice were remarked.*
When wisdom and prudence came into sight, great deceit showed itself.
When harmony no longer governed the six kinships, the bonds of family love grew conspicuous.
When states fell into disorder, loyalty and devotion were noted.

Lao Tse recurs to the idea already touched on: Difficult and easy define each other; long and short reveal each other; former and latter define each other. In the earliest sinless races, the thought of holiness could not arise, as in broad daylight no one uses a candle.

But true holiness is a willed turning from sin; true sacrifice is the giving up of a cherished self-will.

Therefore the present age has its advantage. There can be a willed seeking of the Light, a willingly rendered obedience. Therefore it has been said that more spiritual progress can be made in the iron age than in the golden. But a better golden age lies ahead.

19. *When wisdom and prudence are no longer noteworthy, the people will be happier a hundredfold.*

When humanity and justice cease to be noted, the people will be once more kindly and filial.

When craft is forgotten and gain undesired, thieves and robbers will disappear.

Renounce these three, and know that seeming renunciation is not enough.

Therefore I show men what they should seek:

To show simplicity, keep purity, renounce selfishness, abandon desires.

This way of return to the golden age is, in fact, the way of the disciple; through the renunciation of all the wills of self, with their accumulated sins, to return to the simplicity of obedience; to find joy in the eager effort of obedience instead of in the satisfaction of desire; once more to follow the Way of the Eternal, and thereby to inherit the divine blessedness of the Way, the riches of the Logos.

20. *Give up the desire to be more learned than others, and you will be freed from care.*

How small is the difference between the obedient "yes!" and the disobedient "yea!"

How great is the difference between good and evil.

What all men fear, is easily feared.

They fall into confusion, not checking themselves.

They are carried away, like one who feasts, or one mounted on a tower in spring.

I alone am still; my desires are not aroused.

I am as a new-born child that has not yet smiled to its mother.

I am detached; I seem to have no home.

The multitude have many possessions; I am as one who has lost all.

My thought is indrawn; I seem to know nothing.

The world is wise and prudent; I seem plunged in darkness.

The world is keen; I seem as one bewildered.

I am as a shoreless sea; a barque without a port.

The world is impetuous; I seem inert, like a rustic.

I am apart from other men, because I worship the all-nourishing Mother, the Way.

Lao Tse contrasts the show of outer learning with the pursuit of inner wisdom. Both consist in learning; therefore they are alike, as are "yes" and "yea", yet difference of motive makes them as unlike as good and evil.

This introduces other contrasts between the way of the world and the Way of the disciple. The world is carried outward by desire; the

disciple seeks the inward home. The world is headlong. The disciple enters the silence, detached as a new-born child.

The contrast runs through all writings that speak of the soul. We may find a parallel in Saint Francis:

"As pilgrims and strangers in this world, serving the Lord in poverty and humility, let them go confidently in search of alms. This, my dearest brothers, is the height of the most sublime poverty which has made you heirs and kings of the kingdom of heaven: poor in goods, but exalted in virtue. Let that be your portion, for it leads to the land of the living."

Or we may find our illustration in Isaiah:

"For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him."

Equally apposite would be a passage from the *Katha Upanishad:*

"Thou indeed, pondering on dear and dearly-loved desires, hast passed them by. Not this way of wealth hast thou chosen, in which many men sink. . . ."

For all are equally concerned with the destruction of the fortresses of self, that we may begin to build the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Concerning this task, one might quote the whole of *Light on the Path.* A part of one passage must suffice:

"When the disciple has fully recognized that the very thought of individual rights is only the outcome of the venomous quality in himself, that it is the hiss of the snake of self which poisons with its sting his own life and the lives of those about him, then he is ready to take part in a yearly ceremony which is open to all neophytes who are prepared for it. All weapons of defence and offence are given up; all weapons of mind and heart and brain and spirit. . . . From that ceremony he returns into the world as helpless, as unprotected, as a new-born child. . . ."

Therefore Lao Tse says: I am as one who has lost all; I seem as one bewildered, a barque without a port.

21. *The visible forms of the Great Virtue emanate solely from the Way.*

This is the nature of the Way:
It is without form, It is concealed.
How formless It is, how well concealed!
Within It are the forms of beings.
How well concealed It is, how formless!
Within It are beings.
How profound It is, how deeply hidden!
Within It is the Spiritual Power. This Spiritual Power is enduring and true.

Within It is the unchanging Witness; from of old until now, Its name remains.

It is the door through which all beings come forth.

How do I know that it is thus with all beings? I know it through the Way.

If, following the early translators, we were to write Logos in this passage, to express the Chinese word, Tao, it would be at once quite easily understood. Taking the Great Virtue to be the feminine, the form aspect of the Logos, in Sanskrit the feminine Viraj, the primordial Prakriti, "The Soul of matter, the passive female principle from which everything in this Universe emanated," the masculine aspect of the Logos is spiritual force, which sends forms forth into manifestation.

We can see exactly the same process in our minds, which are small copies of the Logos. In our minds are the images of what we have perceived. The will, the masculine principle, selects its material from these forms and creates some definite mind-image, some picture in the imagination. For example, Shakespeare, gathering many impressions from men and women, used the creative will to form Hamlet and Portia. The actor or actress, using the same creative imagination, takes Shakespeare's words and makes Hamlet and Portia visible.

This understanding of Tao as the Logos is completely in harmony with the great Chinese commentaries, one of which says: "Beginning with the heavens and the earth, down to the myriad beings, all things that have a body, a form, all things that can be seen, are the visible forms of the Great Virtue. They all come forth from Tao." And again: "Tao is bodiless. When It moves through the universe, It becomes the Great Virtue, and then It takes form. This is why the Great Virtue is the manifestation of Tao. Therefore it may be understood that all perceptible forms are the manifestation of Tao in creatures. . . . Tao has neither body nor visible form. Yet, although called bodiless, It contains all beings." To which another commentary adds: "It furnishes the substance of all beings." And, commenting on later words of this passage, the authority first cited says: "All beings without exception pass away. Tao alone passes not away."

This is thoroughly in harmony with all the teachings of the Eastern Wisdom, as set forth, for example, in the Upanishads.

22. *The partial becomes complete.*

The crooked becomes straight.

The empty becomes full.

The worn out becomes new.

He who has little (desire) finds the Way; he who has much, goes astray.

Therefore the Master keeps the oneness of the Way; he is the model of the world.

He seeks not to be seen, therefore he gives light.

He does not magnify himself, therefore he gives inspiration.
He does not vaunt himself, therefore he has true worth.
He does not glorify himself, therefore he is above all.
He strives not, therefore none in the kingdom can stand against him.
The saying of the ancients: "The partial becomes complete," is not an empty phrase.
When a man has attained, the whole world is subject to him.

It has often been said that this ancient Chinese book, written between five and six hundred years before the birth of Christ, is peculiarly Christian in feeling, as, for example, in the emphasis laid on humility. The passage rendered above, well illustrates this.

We might take, for example, the text which the Master Christ took for his first public teaching in the synagogue of his own city, Nazareth, shortly after the temptation in the wilderness: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth."

For it is the work of the holy and healing Logos, as of the Master who declares himself to be the Way, to fill the empty, to make the crooked straight, to give new life to the worn and heavy laden.

And one may quote, perhaps, in supplement, his later words, recorded by the beloved disciple: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing: and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

Perhaps a closer translation of the last verse would be: "As many as I love, I convince and train as children; be zealous therefore, and change thy heart."

The divine Logos, the Master who is the manifested life of the Logos, remains hidden, seeking not to glorify himself; he gives spiritual light and inspiration, making the blind see, healing the brokenhearted. He is unseen, yet the whole world is subject to him, as King.

23. *He who keeps silence, gains detachment.*

The tempest does not endure all the morning; the rain storm does not last all day.

What produces these two? Heaven and earth produce them.

If heaven and earth cannot maintain (tempestuous violence), how then can man?

Therefore, the man who gives himself to the Way, becomes one with the Way; he who gives himself to righteousness, becomes one with righteousness; he who gives himself to evil, becomes one with evil.

He who becomes one with the Way, gains the Way; he who becomes one with righteousness, gains righteousness; he who becomes one with evil, gains (the shame of) evil.

He who does not give all (for the Way), ends by losing the Way.

Regarding the opening phrase, a Chinese commentator humorously says: "The immoderate love of discussion comes from an interior disturbance of the soul, just as the tempest and the rain storm are produced by the disordered action of heaven and earth. If, then, the disturbance of heaven and earth cannot long endure, it will be the same thing, in even greater degree, with the talkativeness of man."

The same commentator further says: "He who has true self-confidence, gains the trust of the men of his time, even when he is silent. But those who love discussion, who ceaselessly abandon themselves to the intemperance of the tongue, the more they speak, the less they are believed. This distrust comes wholly from the fact that they have no true self-confidence."

24. *Who raises himself on tiptoe, stands not firm; who strains his stride, walks not far.*

Who contends for his own view, finds not wisdom.

Who is self-complacent, gives no light.

Who boasts of himself, has no true worth.

Who glorifies himself, shall not long endure.

Viewed from the Way, these acts are like the leavings of a feast, like a repulsive tumour.

Therefore, he who has found the Way, shuns these things.

A Chinese commentator says: "He who stands on tiptoe seeks only to raise his head above others, forgetting that he cannot keep this posture. He who strains his stride, seeks only to outstrip others, forgetting that he cannot continue."

Another commentary says: "He who is self-complacent, with a sort of partiality for himself, imagines that all other men have less wit than he; he cannot profit by their gifts, therefore he finds not wisdom." Which would seem to be the Chinese expression of the Theosophical method.

Yet another commentator says: "He who has found the Way, perseveres in humility."

25. *There is unmanifested Being, which existed before the heavens and the earth.*

How still It is, and bodiless!
It stands alone, unchanging.
It moves through all things, unmenaced.
It may be regarded as the Mother of the universe.
Its name I know not.
To give It a name, I call It the Way.
To describe It, I call It Great.
Being Great, I call It elusive.
Being elusive, I call It far-reaching.
Being far-reaching, I say It returns.
This is why the Way is great, the heavens are great, the earth is great, the King is great.
Man follows the earth; earth follows heaven; heaven follows the Way; the Way follows Its own Being.

One of the commentators says: "If I am asked concerning this Being (the Way), I answer: It has neither head nor tail; It is neither modified nor changed; It has no body or determined place; It knows neither over-abundance nor lack, neither diminution nor increase; It wanes not; It is not born; It is neither yellow nor red, neither white nor blue; It has neither inside nor outside, neither sound nor smell, neither depth nor height, neither form nor brilliance."

This is exactly the method followed in the Upanishads: defining the Eternal by the negatives of everything that is not the Eternal, "Unborn, undying, unindicable."

Another Chinese commentator says: "The Way has no companion in the universe. It dwells outside the limits of beings, and has never changed. Upward, it rises to the heavens; downward, it penetrates to the abysses. It circulates throughout the universe and can suffer no detriment."

Other commentaries add: "The sun's heat burns It not; dampness rots It not; It passes through all bodies and incurs no danger. It expands throughout the heavens and the earth, and dwells in the hearts of all beings; It is the source of all births, the root of all transformations. The heavens, the earth, man and all creatures, have need of It, that they may live. It nourishes all beings as a mother nourishes her children. This is why Lao Tse says, It may be regarded as the Mother of the universe."

C. J.

(*To be continued*)

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Recorder spoke with an air of finality. It was hot. "The programme of the April issue is to be continued," he said. "This is to be an experience meeting. If I do the writing, you must do the thinking. Who will begin? Who has had an experience during the past quarter which is likely to be of service to others?"

"I doubt if one man in a million learns anything from the experience of others," the Engineer commented. "But I can tell you one thing that jumped at me a few days ago, and which may possibly suggest a subject for self-examination. It dawned on me suddenly that, in my business, I was asking the Master to co-operate with me, while, in my work 'uptown,' that is to say, for The Theosophical Society and so forth, I was trying to co-operate with him. I found shades and gradations of difference, but, in a general way, my attitude was what I have stated. I wonder if there are fathers and mothers who make the same mistake, and who ask the Master to further their own plans and wishes for their children, instead of trying to find out what his plans and wishes are, and then working to co-operate with him."

"I see your point, and I agree with you," remarked the Philosopher. "But I believe the difference, as usual, between a right and a wrong attitude, is a hair line, and that the ideal is not easy to find or to follow. There is much to be said for the sense of possession of the old-time family butler, who talked about 'my silver.' He did not really think of the silver as his; but his sense of responsibility was so great, and his pride in the right performance of his duties was so intense, that he completely identified his interests with those of the family he served. If we were the faithful and devoted servants of the Masters, that we ought to be, we should feel a sort of proprietary interest in their work, without that sense of possession which is characteristic of the lower personal self."

"Servants!" exclaimed the Visitor. "Is that how people ought to feel toward the Masters or toward anyone or anything in space?"

Now the Visitor was an old friend, a consistent sceptic who enjoys blunt speech and who never gets his feelings hurt. He was quite prepared, it seemed, for what followed.

"Bury your old democracy," the Gael thundered, with mock fury. "It stinketh. Even as a theory, there is nothing left of it except the worms of its own corruption. Part of its vileness is its contempt for humble service. Learn, oh wretched remnant of a bygone age, that a real King is a servant of his God; that a real nobleman is a servant of his God and of his King, and that the only utter outcast is the man who serves himself, because he, whether he knows it or not, is the servant of the devil!"

Hot as it was, everyone laughed at the Gael's explosion.

"Triumphant democracy," our Visitor retorted, imperturbably. "It must be thirty years since Andrew Carnegie flung that in the face of England. And look at the world to-day: everywhere democracy triumphs, even in China. It is a new world, with democracy as foundation and goal."

"A paradise of a world," said the Gael. "If you feel a proprietary interest in democracy, to quote a previous speaker, why not try a dose of Russia, although China, which you have named, might save your soul from worse. Democracy, my friend, *is* triumphant: no one will deny you that. The writers of the Church Litany did not have foresight enough to include it with 'plague, pestilence, and famine.' Hence, too few have prayed, 'From it, Good Lord, deliver us.' It *is* triumphant, with the result that, the more there is of it in any given country, the more appalling the condition of that country. England has more of it than France, so England is worse off than France. The United States has less than either, so the United States is better off than either,—in spite of every imaginable natural handicap. *Demos* means 'the mob,' and *Krateō* means 'I reign': there you have it. It is the opposite of 'government by the best,' because, even if you choose to interpret 'mob' as meaning 'average,' you know as well as I do that the average intelligence and the average morality, of a mixed population of from fifty to a hundred millions, gives you at best the cousin of a Sinn Feiner."

"Enough," declared the Recorder at this point. "You have hit on a subject that involves the whole of philosophy, both in theory and in practice. We cannot possibly dispose of it at one meeting. And I want your experience. . . ."

"Please, one moment," the Historian interrupted. "Before we leave the Gael to sizzle in his still unexpressed indignation, let me comfort him to the extent of reading an amazing *reductio ad absurdum* of the democratic hypothesis,—amazing, because written by a man who, upon other subjects, can write sound sense, and who is a devout believer in the very theory which he unintentionally destroys. *Leaves for Quiet Hours,* by Dr. George Matheson, formerly Minister of a Parish in Edinburgh, is in many ways a really admirable book. It consists of brief sermons or meditations, and is practically and deeply religious. Yet listen to this: 'Easter Day was a new Christmas Day; it was the second birth of Christ. His second birth was grander than His first. His first birth was under disadvantages. The disadvantage lay not in the manger, but in the royal lineage. The swaddling bands that circumscribed Him were not the facts of His poverty, but the glories of His ancestors; the royal line of David separated Him from the main line of humanity. But when He came from the dead He changed his lineage. He broke with the line of David—with all lines but the lowliest. His second life was not from Bethlehem: it was from the common dust of all cities—from the city of the dead. . . . With Easter morn He came up from

the *depths*.' The humour of it! Born a parasite, because by birth of royal lineage, he went through the wash, as it were, and came out the other side a good democrat, fit at last to shake hands with the proletariat!"

"It reminds me of a coloured preacher among the Swazies," said the Scientist, "who used to assure his converts that when Christ rose from the dead, he came up *black*."

"Next!"—and the Recorder turned to the Ancient for help. "What have you got that will divert their minds?"

"An old letter, that I came across a few days ago, may not conform entirely to your demand for an 'experience'; but it can at least very easily be turned into an experience, by those who will listen and read rightly. Here it is,"—and the Ancient read as follows:

" 'My son: what is your object in life? Your answer, I am afraid, if you were honest, would be,—to do your duty and to avoid sin.

" 'Is that the best you can do? As a member of The Theosophical Society, of the ———— and of the ————, with the marvellous advantages and opportunities which such membership gives you, ought you not at least to pray and to work for *a passion* for the cause of the Masters, as you understand their cause? Will you please meditate on the meaning of the word "passion"?

" 'I can assure you of one thing: there is no happiness on earth, and heaven has no existence, except for right passion, for right love. Negative contentment is not happiness. Nor can it last. Negative contentment, like all other negative attitudes, leads only to negation, including the negation of itself.

" 'There is no happiness on earth, there is no heaven, except for a love so great, a passion so intense, that they carry you out of yourself, above yourself, to the world of reality and of things everlasting. The function of reason, primarily, is to lead you to that conviction; then, with the help of will and imagination, reason should feed the growth of love and passion; later, when love has become pure utterly, divine insight will take the place of reason, but, until that stage of purity is reached, reason will still serve to control and to direct the love and the passion burning within you.

" 'Unite your prayers and your desires with those of Masters,—with those of your own Master, who prays ceaselessly that your heart may become a living torch. *Realize* that that is his prayer for you. Feel his prayer, around you and within you. Make it your own; echo it, from the mud of your own nature. Rejoice that, because you are mud, or because you live in the mud and are muddy,—your echoed prayer will have more power, in some ways, than the prayers of angels who have never sinned. Rejoice that you can turn some fraction of the mud of the world (the fraction you have made your own) into that which catches and makes more vibrant the prayers which reach you from

heaven. A man nullifies his prayers, if he permits himself to think that he originates them.

" 'But beware: do not confuse passion with emotion; do not mistake the red heat of sensuality for the white heat of pure fervour. Excitement is an opposite of spirituality. Beware lest you misuse the fire from heaven. Pray for it ceaselessly, but, if it should seem that your prayer remains unanswered, give thanks for the gift of desire, and give thanks that, in their compassion, the wise gods give you time to purify the temple which your mind and senses have polluted, and which must be made clean if that fire is to burn there safely.' "

"I like your letter, but I like mine too," commented the Lawyer. "Mine was written by 'Cavé,' not long ago, to a friend who very generously sent me a copy, with the thought that it might be of help to others, and perhaps through the medium of the 'Screen.' Shall I read it?"

We at once asked him to do so, and he read the following letter, omitting only some opening sentences:

" ' . . . You may remember saying something to the effect that perhaps what was the matter with you was that material life always had seemed so beautiful to you. I do not pretend to quote you, for it was not what you said which struck me, but the ideas which they suggested to my own mind about you—I saw something that you needed to have told you, that (unconsciously, perhaps), you were "asking" in your real and deeper self. This is what I should like to say about it:

" 'The material world, the physical world, is full of beauty. God made it, and all that He made is beautiful. In its essence it is the veil, the symbol, of the spiritual world. And he who cannot or does not see its beauty, is blind to truth. But here is where the difference lies.

" 'One man sees this beauty and loves it for *itself,* desires it for *itself.* Another man sees that beauty and loves it for *what it reminds him of,* and desires in consequence more intensely that of *which it is a reminder.* Let me make my meaning clearer by an analogy, if I can.

" 'Suppose you were travelling in New Zealand where the scenery is superb. You are away from home and wife and children and all the sweet surroundings which make life dear. You see something—never mind what—mountain or valley or tree or flower, which reminds you of home. Your heart fills,—love and longing almost overpower you; but it is not that mountain, that valley, that tree or that flower which has given you the feeling; it is that of which it has reminded you, to which your heart is given. You have seen and admired all that superb scenery. You may thoroughly have enjoyed it; but it is a foreign land, a land in which you are merely a traveller, in that sense an "exile." And it is the suggestion of home that breaks your heart.

" 'Is my point clear?

" 'This is the difference between the man who is a disciple and the man who is not a disciple. All other differences are minor in com-

parison, because they grow out of this. The disciple sees all the beauty in the world—and I am using that word in its widest sense—indeed he sees it more clearly than the "native": but that which moves him in the beauty is the suggestion of "home," which constantly breaks his heart with a divine nostalgia. He is *not* "at home" in it; the surroundings, the ties of the world, are not his: he is "a stranger and a sojourner as all his people were," as he and his people always will be until the end of time. These feelings in him are not forced; he does not wrench himself away and make himself feel this way because he has some idea that he ought so to feel. No, he feels that way because he cannot feel any other way—because those are the facts of his consciousness and of his affections. He has to force himself to be interested in the affairs of the world, in his surroundings, in the members of his family, because he is among them for a purpose. He is sojourning in this foreign land to accomplish some piece of business—his "Father's business." Perhaps there are other "Exiles" to whom he should minister, some who have lived so long from home that they have almost forgotten, or who have suffered so much in exile that their faculties are impaired—prisoners, maybe, of the Father's enemies, like the Englishman in Kipling's story, *The Man that Was.* Perhaps there are things he must learn, or debts he must pay, or accounts to straighten out—there are many reasons, but always and for ever he is an "exile" and feels himself such.

" 'This is the great touchstone—Where do I feel at home? What are the things that touch the depths of me? For what are my deepest yearnings? And then: Am I true to them? Or do I keep them in some inner shrine for hours of meditation, and daily wind myself about other things, no matter how beautiful, which are not part of my real self? A man having this touchstone can always get his "bearings" on the Path.' "

We were grateful to the Lawyer, and said so. But the Recorder was still hunting for an 'experience,' and turned to the Orientalist, appealing to him for something at first hand.

"I think you are limiting the idea of experience," was the answer. "The letters just read to us were the fruit of experience, and perhaps of years of experience. A passing event or impression, cannot tell as much. Last week I saw a sunset, and it removed, for the moment, one of the veils between my eyes and God. But that kind of an experience cannot be told in words, unless perhaps in some great poem, such as I can never hope to write. Music might tell it: but I am no musician . . . I can speak, however, of a lesson which the past quarter, in my own experience, has reiterated a dozen times,—that a sense of humour is essential if you would enter the kingdom of heaven.

"Few people realize that both Buddha and Christ possessed a divine sense of humour. Some people, I believe, would feel that to attribute humour to Christ would be irreverent. What nonsense! What hopeless misunderstanding! Would they limit humour to horse-play? Where does humour come from, if not from the Eternal?

"The irony of both Christ and Buddha was so fine that it was lost, as a rule, on their followers, who record, with unresponsive seriousness, sayings too deeply humorous for laughter. Do you remember Buddha's conversation with Sâriputta, as told in the *Maha Parinibbana Sutta?*

" 'Now the venerable Sâriputta came to the place where the Blessed One was, and having saluted him, took his seat respectfully at his side, and said: "Lord! such faith have I in the Blessed One, that methinks there never has been, nor will there be, nor is there now any other, whether Samana or Brahman, who is greater and wiser than the Blessed One, that is to say, as regards the higher wisdom."

" ' "Grand and bold are the words of thy mouth, Sâriputta: verily, thou hast burst forth into a song of ecstasy! Of course then thou hast known all the Blessed Ones who in the long ages of the past have been Arahat Buddhas, comprehending their minds with yours, and aware what their conduct was, what their doctrine, what their wisdom, what their mode of life, and what salvation they attained to?" '

"The irony of that was obvious. Less obvious, but perhaps more humorous, was the irony of Buddha's reply to Ananda, then a young monk:

" 'How are we to conduct ourselves, Lord, with regard to womankind?'

" 'Don't see them, Ananda.'

" 'But if we should see them, what are we to do?'

" 'Abstain from speech, Ananda.'

" 'But if they should speak to us, Lord, what are we to do?'

" 'Keep wide awake, Ananda.' "

"The irony of Christ in many cases was scathing, as when, addressing the Scribes and Pharisees, he spoke of the ninety and nine 'just' persons, 'which need no repentance,'—implying, of course, that no such persons existed.

"The humour of H. P. Blavatsky was of a different order. Like the humour of those she revered and followed, it was never unkind or mean. But it was rough hewn. It was titanic. She herself was often the bull's-eye of her target. A delightful instance of her humour is recorded by W. B. Yeats in a recent article. She had many visitors, as usual. 'They talked and she played patience, and totted up her score on the green baize, and generally seemed to listen, but sometimes she would listen no more. There was a woman who talked perpetually of "the divine spark" within her, until Madame Blavatsky stopped her with—"Yes, my dear, you have a divine spark within you and if you are not very careful you will hear it snore." '

"Some people would call that unkind. But H. P. B. knew to whom—to what—she was talking. The woman probably had a hide like a rhinoceros, and H. P. B.'s first duty was to protect her other visitors."

"And what has been your experience?" the Orientalist concluded, addressing the Banker, the silent member of our party. "Now that the Recorder has pushed me to it, I do not intend that anyone shall escape!"

The Banker plunged right in. "I have been chasing some of my 'defeatist' ideas and feelings," he said. "Everyone harbours them, I believe. They are elementals, of course, and, judging by my own experience, they are more dangerous than cruder sins, because they are able to masquerade as angels of humility. They paralyse the will by throwing into the mind, at one time a picture of fatigue, at another time a picture of failure—memories of past failures, anticipations of future failures. In intellectual effort, such as that involved in writing, the fatigue is not often felt while we write. It is felt as a rule before we begin, or after we have finished. In the latter case, the fatigue may be regarded as genuine. But when we hesitate to begin, we shall find in most cases that what is needed is impetus, which is the result of an initial push. In other words, by an effort of the will we can 'get started,' after which, progress is easy. To start a physical object moving, requires ten times the power required to keep it moving. To push an automobile by your own weight and strength may be difficult. It may be still more difficult to stop it, once your initial impulse has proved effective.

"It is important in any case, as I see it, to recognize the character and methods of our 'defeatist' elementals, because they are, in truth, the devil. They will hurl 'failure' at us, whenever we are foolish enough to listen to them, and much that is best in us will respond with emphatic agreement. The only remedy I know is to meet them with agreement, and then with deliberate thanksgiving,—on the ground that the more incompetent and useless we are, the greater the glory of Masters who, in spite of our failures, will succeed at last in turning both us, and the people we ought to be serving, into denizens of the world of light."

"There is one more," said the Orientalist. "The Scientist has not yet given us his experience."

The Scientist laughed. "It will not please you," he said. "But you may have it for what it is worth. A man in a position of authority said to me recently (he was exhausted): 'No one ever comes near me except to ask for something. What they ask for, may be only that I should listen to them,—listen to their complaints, their troubles, their plans, their problems. Yet in that case they ask for sympathy, and always for attention. As I get older and more tired, there are moments when I dread the sound of a human voice: its demand for attention seems unendurable.'

"It may be said that any man who felt like that, when others needed him or thought they did, must have lacked sympathy; certainly lacked love. But he assured me that a real need did not affect him that way in the least. To be able to meet a real need, helped and stimulated him. The trouble was, he said, that so few supposed needs are real. People talk, he said, for the sake of talking. They 'let off steam' at the expense

of others. They want attention: but he would not admit that a desire for attention can be classed as a real need.

"I suspect this also: that the most devoted of mothers, who is constantly with a number of small children, asking this and wanting that—and always wanting attention—feels at times as if she could not endure the depletion of it a moment longer. Even their devotion—supposing that to exist—would prove exhausting.

"Therefore it seems to me that we may well ask ourselves to what extent, if at all, we inflict the same exhaustion on the Masters. Some people would say at once: 'that is different, for Masters have infinite love and strength, infinite sympathy and infinite patience.' My answer would be: 'nothing is infinite, short of the Absolute; that which is still human cannot be infinite; therefore the humanity of Masters must be capable of exhaustion.'"

"Do you mean to imply that we should not go to the Masters, or to our own Master—that, for instance, I ought not to go to Christ with my troubles? How about the admonition I have so often heard, to go to him with everything, with absolutely everything that concerns us throughout the day?"

"My answer would be: that is what a mother wants from her children. She wants it even when they grow up. She wants all their real troubles; all their real problems. Her attitude never changes. But, as her children grow up, ought not their attitude to change? As small children, they took everything to her. Full of egotism, as small children are, it never entered their minds that she would not be as thrilled as they were by the discovery of a new stick or pebble, or by the sight of a fire-engine on the street. While small children, it did not occur to them that she might be exhausted when they were not. But her influence would have been harmful if, as they grew older, she had not taught them to be considerate, even of herself."

"But how can you pray, without asking the Master's attention?"

"That is just the problem," the Scientist replied: and he then relapsed into stony silence.

"Well?" The Gael looked at him in shocked surprise. Still there was silence. The Scientist seemed lost in the contemplation of his problem. "Another of your traps," remarked the Gael. "Science is always like that,—playing with the surface of things and leaving it to others to clean up the mess! Science is . . ."

"It will not take any longer to clean up the mess," the Recorder interjected, hopefully.

"But our feelings, man, our feelings," the Gael retorted. "It is bad enough to make us talk, on a day like this; but to try to make us think is barbarous. And I refuse to do it . . . Anyone can solve his problem."

"How?"

"Does not every beginner know that, in order to begin, he must

strive to recover the child-state he has lost; that he must learn to pray about everything; must learn to refer the smallest act of his life, both inner and outer, to the judgment of Christ, for the blessing of Christ, and must make that attitude habitual, before it would be safe for him to consider what is involved in 'growing up'?

"Being a Scientist, poor thing, his premises, from first to last, are full of flaws . . . I am not criticizing him. I am commiserating . . . A mother does tire. But her fatigue does not count in comparison with her torture of anxiety when she feels that her child is holding back something from her, perhaps from motives of false consideration. And a Master, being human, doubtless experiences fatigue: but we know no more of the nature of that fatigue than we know what it means to be 'grown up' spiritually. When the Master said to St. Matilda,—'There is not a bee that throws itself with such eagerness upon the flowers in order to suck the honey from them, as I, through the intensity of my love, hasten to the soul that desires me'—it seems to me that he anticipated the Scientist's objections by several hundred years.

"And what is the use of speculating about the attitude we ought to adopt, or the consideration we ought to show, when we begin to 'grow up'? We are no more able to imagine what that condition will be than a little girl I once knew who used to say: 'Someday I shall be grown up like mother; and then I shall wear my hair on the top of my head, and I shall go into the kitchen, as she does.' No, Sir: these mental speculations about spiritual things; these attempts to reason, 'scientifically,' from the half-known to the unknown, with the idea that you will thus know something you did not know before,—are the methods that H. P. B. anathematized in *Isis,* and that she continued to anathematize until the day of her death."

The Scientist remained plunged in thought. "Thank you," the Recorder remarked, addressing him. And we prepared to adjourn.

"One word more," the Ancient requested. "I think it ought to be made clear that Masters are subject to universal law, as we are; and that they obey the law, as we do not. A Master, in his compassion, may be longing to help someone; but if that person, for lack of faith, or from diffidence, or for any motive whatsoever, good or bad, does not go to the Master, telling him all about it and asking for help,—the Master's hands are tied. He is barred from giving direct help. We must open the doors of our hearts, of our minds, of our desires, of all the circumstances of our lives, before the Master can enter in. He cannot open them from the outside. He would not if he could. He is not a burglar, or an intruder. He respects our 'rights,' our reservations, our locked closets. Above all, he respects the laws of his own being. He promises that if we will throw our doors open to him, he will enter and will share our lives with us. But he warns us that we must throw them open, or that he must stay outside." T.

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

July 25th, 1912.

DEAR ————

I returned today from a ten days' very strenuous trip west on business, and found your letter of the 21st. Dear lady, I am sorry, more sorry than I can tell, for all your anxiety and distress and worry. But it is a real thing we all are trying to do—to reach the Master—and we must expect sorrow and hardship and trouble until we have learned to take them all to the Master, to share them with him. As we do so, we gain power from him to bear them cheerfully, serenely, and in the process we shed our impurities of all kinds, until we are fit to enter his presence.

It is perfectly normal for ———— to have reactions of all kinds—you must expect them. And please try to realize that you are trying, have been trying, to bring him to the Master, when what he needs first is to be made to behave, in the ordinary commonplace way. He must learn obedience, self-control, good manners, unselfishness,—all these and more before there can be hope that he will go further. He may appear for a time to go forward on the path of Life and Immortality, but sooner or later his commonplace faults, his lack of discipline, will rise up as insuperable barriers.

So these must be got rid of first. And you, dear lady, stop calling yourself names. You are what you are, and when upset and overwrought, are still the same person with the same virtues, the same weaknesses, as when at your best and highest. Calling names does no good: indeed it indulges the wrong mood you are in when you do it.

It is the same old story—a very simple story—self-control, patience, serenity, faith (even when, especially when, things go wrong), poise, calmness, devotion. You know them all, and their necessity. In a word, try to be yourself what you would desire ———— to become. . . .

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

August 16th, 1912.

DEAR ————

I am very much obliged for the report of July 29th, which I return, as I have marked it.

I suggest that you combine the first two columns. "Silence" covers the ground. Outer silence is not to talk with the mouth. Inner silence is not to talk with the mind. Also you could combine "Repose" and "Do not hurry." Please add "Gentleness."

Also there is a positive and negative aspect of each quality:

Patience	Impatience
Repose	Hurry
Gentleness	Roughness
Quietude	Noisiness
Punctuality	Lateness

It would, I think, be useful for you to mark yourself for the times you have remembered the good, as well as for the times you have done the bad. It will encourage you to see how much effort you really make, and how very often your efforts are successful. You dwell too much on the number of failures, hence your occasional fits of discouragement. . . .

No, you will not lose your glimpse of what contemplation means, when you stop suffering. On the contrary, we do all spiritual exercises better when happy than when miserable. As a matter of fact, being unhappy is wrong: it is unnatural and a result of our own perverseness.

Last year I suffered more than ever before in my life because I had to surrender something I loved very dearly and did not want to give up. After it was all over and I had surrendered, I *saw* for the first time the truth, that I did not really want that thing and would not take it back, and that all my pain came from ignorance and misunderstanding. It had all been explained to me in the effort to save me suffering, but I could not understand until I had made the sacrifice, or what I then thought was a tremendous sacrifice. Now I see that what I called a sacrifice was no more a sacrifice than when you pay a dollar for something you want very much. You have not the dollar any more, but you have what you very much prefer to the dollar. This is true of *all* sacrifice, of all giving up of self—of all the pain of self-conquest and purification. . . .

Now *please* be patient and kind and gentle with yourself, and trust the Master's love and wisdom to see you safely through every crisis.

As always,

———— C. A. Griscom.

Vevey, September 2nd, 1912.

Dear ————

I am much obliged for your several letters and reports. The dominant feeling I have is one of affectionate sympathy for you,—you do have such a constant succession of troubles and trials. I am so sorry ———— was again ill, not for his sake, for about him I have no anxiety. The Master knows and does what is good and best for him. About you, too, I have no anxiety, for he also knows what is well for you, but I have a deep sympathy. I would save you these experiences if I could; I regret the necessity for you to live through these trials in order to learn their lesson. I still more regret the obvious fact that, like

every one else I know, especially including myself, we are so stupid and obstinate and self-willed, that we have to go through the same experience time and time again instead of only once. Oh! why do we not learn our lessons! Why do we not see that it would *pay* to surrender and no longer to *fight!* You fight ————'s illness; why not stop fighting it? Accept it, and while doing everything you possibly can to remedy, ameliorate and cure, welcome it as the best possible thing for him and for you, and look deep into it for the lesson it is designed to teach both of you. The instant that lesson is learned, the illness will go.

He [the Master] loves you very much, watches over you ceaselessly —and longs for a surcease of your suffering.

As ever,
Yours sincerely,
C. A. GRISCOM.

September 19th, 1912.

DEAR ————

I have your letter of September 10th, and it quite cheered me up. I feel that you are doing very well, and that you are gradually getting control of those activities of your personality which are your barriers. It may not seem so to you, at times, but it does to us. Keep it up—the fight—and there is no doubt at all that you will win out. . . .

I am dreadfully sorry about ————: it is heart-breaking, and I wish there were something I could do to help, but beyond sympathy I know of nothing. . . .

I shall go into the question of your records when we meet. I think they also show improvement. . . .

With kindest regards and best wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

October 15th, 1912.

DEAR ————

I have your letter. I think you must expect any child to be rebellious and impertinent and flatly disobedient at times. I should; and I do not blame myself, or think that everything I have done or tried to do is wrong, because this very natural and usual thing has happened. There may be children who never act in this way, but I have never known them. So please do not think that the world has come to an end, even your world, or that the Master is any farther off than before.

* * * * * * * *

I am, as always,
Sincerely yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

November 26th, 1912.

DEAR ————

I was exceedingly sorry to learn from ———— this morning of the continued hard time which you are having.

I hope it is needless to assure you of my deepest sympathy. There is one thing more I want to say. It is at times like these, when our burdens seem more than we can bear, when our keeping of our Rule breaks down and when we see ourselves to be utterly unworthy, that the Master wants most that we go to him and tell him our troubles and our failures. He is not a fair-weather friend; he is the friend of the sinner, of the man who has failed, who is failing daily, who cannot carry his burdens.

All the Master asks of us is that we shall continue to try. It is our effort that he measures us by, not our accomplishment. Instead of its being sacrilegious to go to him when you are in a bad condition, that is just the time when he wants you most and when it would be sacrilegious not to go.

With kind regards, I am sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

1913.

DEAR ———— * * * * * * *

Would it help you to realize that the Master wants you in exactly your present environment? He sees that you need all the harassments and annoyances, and interruptions and worries and details, which interfere with your serenity and your efforts. He wants you to learn quietude, gentleness, dignity, courtesy, in the midst of confusion and trial. He would have put you in a convent, or in an entirely different set of circumstances, if that had been the experience you needed. That being so, and you must convince yourself of it, then you can go forward with courage and hope, to do what he wants you to do—courage and hope, because we know he never asks more of us than we can perform. He never gives us a task beyond our strength. Difficult—yes. It would not be worth doing if it were not difficult. We *want* to do something hard for him.

If you go back over your own records, you will find that when you fail most completely, it is after you have had too little sleep and too much fatigue. It is nearly always a question of physical nerves and has but little to do with your character. We are greater slaves to our bodies than we realize, or like to believe,—hence the need for simplicity of living, of food, of rest. For instance, you write one time that you waited up till 12.30 A. M. for ———— and were very tired. Then that you did not want to pray, and that your prayers were no good. Who could have fervent and heart-felt prayers at 1 A. M. after eighteen hours' hard work and when dog-tired? Surely you are foolish to blame yourself for such a feeling? What you can blame yourself for is letting

yourself get so tired. If that was unavoidable, as it sometimes is, then it is better to postpone your prayers entirely, if you are going to be discouraged and unhappy because you do not go to them with enthusiasm and devotion.

Remember, too, always, that it is our effort that counts. Keep on trying. That is the secret. No matter how hard and dull and inert we are,—if we keep trying, in time we shall wear through our shell and reach Him in the clear light of the inner world. Look forward to that, and determine to get there.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. Griscom.

Dear ———— March 11th, 1913.

If you will send me the original of your reports, hereafter, I can return them to you fairly promptly and it will save you the labour of copying them. I want to save you all unnecessary work, and you should try to do the same. I have been over a big batch of them which have accumulated during these very busy times.

You *should* reread your reports, at regular intervals. A large part of their value lies in this. Please remember this and act on it.

I have told you many times that your recollection has not gone. You are more recollected now than ever before in your life. Believe me, this is true. We pass through phases of these things, learning one phase; and then another, which we do not yet know, or have not mastered, comes up, and we are drilled on that. Only those above us can see what we really are and what we really accomplish. It is all a question of the amount we *try,* not the amount we accomplish, or seem to ourselves to accomplish. Also, sometimes we are helped at the start, and then, when we get on our feet a little, the help is withdrawn. The immediate effect of that is to make us feel that we have gone down hill and are doing very badly, while, as a matter of fact, we are doing well.

Both of these things are true with you. You are now doing with little or no help what a year or two ago you could only do with a great deal of help. . . .

And now what can I say that will be helpful? I have been reading your records for nearly two hours and feel as if I had had a long talk with you. Poor dear child, fretting and fuming, and accusing herself and blaming herself, scolding herself, as if she were a very bad child, while all the time she is a very good child and is trying very hard. It is pitiful, and I wish there were something I could do to lessen the strain and ease the sore heart.

The Master loves you, I know it, and you can know it too, if you will be still for a moment and allow his peace and love to well up inside you.

Look for it in your heart, not in your mind.
And now good night. As always,

C. A. GRISCOM.

April 3rd, 1913.

DEAR ———

I return your recent reports. You need rest, more sleep, less running about, more quiet. It is the same old story, and until you get these there is no use in giving you more advice.

You can rest as a sacrifice to the Master, something you force yourself to do for love of him. That will help your recollection both ways.

You are learning all the time, and doing well in the main, but you fret too much about what you call your failures. Think more of your successes and of your efforts, and less of what seem to you inadequate results. They belong to the Master. You *do* love him. What is your intense desire to love, save love?

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

August 2nd, 1913.

DEAR ——— * * * * * * * *

I wish you did not react so constantly and so violently. You write what you feel and think at the time, which is what I want, and then an hour, or a day, or a week afterwards, you always say that what you wrote were just lies. They were *not*. They may not sound true in another mood, but were when you wrote.

* * * * * * * *

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

August 8th, 1913.

DEAR ———

I have your special delivery letter. I also have your last record.

No one but a Master should accept the responsibility of another's life. I certainly would not dare. All I can do for you is to suggest, to advise, to encourage, to readjust.

There is no use looking for another way. You can progress only by the way already pointed out to you: and, in the main, that is the way of quietness, of silence, stillness of mind and of body, of serenity, of calmness. You must learn these. Their absence is the cause of your various troubles, as you see for yourself.

You have been told this dozens of times, and often you have said that at last you understood. But you have never done it. Even this summer, when rare opportunity has been given you, you will not rest.

What is the use of talking about obedience, of your desire to dedicate yourself, your life, your energies, to the Master, when you will not do this one thing you have been told to do with steady insistence for three years?

You are tempted, among other things, by the thought that you can help people. You are intended to help people—in time. But you must learn first to establish in yourself that which you desire to give them. It is folly at present to permit yourself to violate your own Rule and duty in the hope of helping others.

Get, if you can, a copy of Walter Old's edition of *The Tao-Teh-King*. It may help you to understand; for your trouble is that you do not understand. It is not lack of will, or of desire, but of understanding, and understanding sometimes comes slowly and painfully. But do not be discouraged. You know much more now than you did six months ago, or a year ago, and you are learning by degrees. Persist, and you will come out all right; perhaps sooner than you expect.

I am, as always,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

August 12th, 1913.

DEAR ———

By all means change the form of your report. It ought to be what you find most useful. The blank form you enclose seems to me very good. . . .

You do not need more direction or more advice. You need to carry out that already given you: to *rest,* REST, REST: to be quiet, physically and mentally. You have not as yet even a glimmer of what this means, and it is *your* Path to the Master and to your heart's desire.

With kind regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

September 8th, 1913.

DEAR ——— * * * * * * * *

I think you were wise. . . . I should not, however, have written to Mrs. X. You must beware of scrupulosity. You say without hesitation that you are "out" when you wish to preserve your privacy. So in the street you can pretend not to hear, although technically you do. Mrs. X. is pretty sure to misunderstand such a letter, and you must do nothing to make people think you are peculiar. This is for future guidance—not that there is anything more to do in this case. . . .

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

REVIEWS

The Hindu Yoga System, Charles Rockwell Lanman, Harvard University (Harvard Theological Review, October, 1918). This valuable essay should have been reviewed nearly three years ago. But the theme is so enduring that consideration of it is always timely.

The first thing that strikes one, in Professor Lanman's study of the Yoga system (and, more specifically, of the translation of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, with Commentary, by Dr. J. H. Woods, published in the Harvard Oriental Series), is his method: he begins by comparing the spiritual experience recorded in the Yoga Sutras with the spiritual experience of others, a Christian mystic, Angelus Silesius who, some three hundred years ago, sought "to attain the unattainable, to utter the unutterable," and certain of the Greek philosophers, such as Demokritos of Abdera, who may owe to contact with India certain of his teachings, such as "his view concerning peace of mind." There is the clear recognition that the Indian teachings rest upon the spiritual experience of those "followers of the Mystic Way, who—time out of mind—have held retreat for meditation in the solemn stillness of the forests 'lapped by the storied Hydaspes,'"—the Jelum, rising in the North Western Himalayas, in Kashmir. This comparison of spiritual experience is worked out with special closeness between the Yoga Sutras and that great compendium of Buddhism, Buddhaghosa's Way of Salvation (Visuddhi-magga).

And we find this profound generalisation: that all the spiritual records of India rest upon "the fundamental morality (specifically, neither Brahmanical nor Jainistic nor Buddhist) which is an essential preliminary for any system of ascetic religious training, and is accordingly taught again and again, now with a touch of gentle humour, now sternly, and always cogently, by Brahmans and Jains and Buddhists alike."

We should like to add, or, indeed, to set down first, the Rajanyas or Rajputs, to whom some of the greatest passages in the Upanishads are explicitly attributed; while both Krishna and the Buddha himself were of that kingly race.

The second striking thing in this essay is the very serious tribute paid to the value of the Yoga system. The Commentary, attributed to Vyasa, which may be used in the general sense of "Revealer", rather than as a proper name, is, we are told, "informed by the noblest spirit and loftiest purpose"; the commentary on a passage in the third book, concerning temptation, "rises to a pitch of sustained and noble eloquence"; while the "historic importance and moral dignity" of the work is insisted on. And, in a striking comparison between the Four Noble Truths of the Buddha and the "five means to the higher concentration" in the Yoga Sutras (i, 20), "faith and energy and mindfulness and concentration and insight," and between the treatment of the higher states of consciousness in the two systems, there is this notable comment: "The whole spiritual situation in both cases is similar; and that the substantial coincidences of the two descriptions may be nothing more than the natural outcome of that similarity, we will not deny."

The third point, of subordinate, yet genuine interest, is the discussion of "the supernormal powers which, as Buddhist and Yoga texts alike maintain, are among

the fruits of the cultivation of profound concentration or samadhi. In order to make my meaning clear, let me instance some of these powers; such are clairvoyance and clairaudience, knowledge of the future and of one's previous births, thought reading, power to become invisible, the cessation of hunger and thirst, the power of hypnotic suggestion: 'your mind-stuff enters the body of another', the power to walk upon water or a spider's thread or sunbeams or to pass through the air, the power by reason of which 'the fire, hot as it is, burns you not', and so on. To seek these powers as an end, or to make a display of them to satisfy the curiosity of the vulgar, is wholly unworthy, and indeed most strictly forbidden. In the Gospel-narrative of the temptation, when the Devil says, 'If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence', the answer of Jesus is an uncompromising rebuke. And in like spirit, the Mahabharata threatens with 'a hell from which there is no release' the Yogins who are thus guilty."

In this context Professor Lanman has much of value to say of "the interest of studying Yoga in the light of the discoveries of modern psychology"; of Braid's hypnotism; of William James. In a word, the subject is treated in a sincere and adequate way.

But the passages which make the most direct appeal to the present reviewer come toward the end of the essay. On the one hand, like certain allusions in Shakespeare's plays, they fix the time when it was written. On the other hand, they reveal the spiritual integrity of the writer. The passages are these:

Speaking of the work of translation carried out by Dr. J. H. Woods in the fine Harvard edition of the Yoga Sutras, Professor Lanman pays tribute to the "genuine enthusiasm and indomitable patience" required. "All this and much more was needed to advance our scientific salients into the territory of the Hindu dialecticians. We may well imagine those jealous guardians of their sacred lore as saying to themselves of us, *ils ne passeront jamais!* But Dr. Woods' intellectual emplacements were good, and his preliminary bombardments have been effective."

So much for the time note. Now for the greater matter. Professor Lanman goes on to speak of "our dearly loved French brothers with whom he (Dr. Woods) is now so zealously working," and who "are showing us the supremely great lesson, that the first thing needed for substantial victory is the loftiest moral courage."

C. J.

Un Drame dans le monde, by Paul Bourget (Plon-Nourrit, Paris), is the latest publication, we believe, of this great psychologist and artist.

While it is not customary for the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY to review novels, unless they deal avowedly with Theosophy, we wish to use this opportunity to pay our respects to a writer whose aim, throughout his long career, has been to portray life truly, and whose understanding of life, therefore, has never ceased to grow in depth and clarity. Working, at first simply as an artist, but as an artist who loved the truth for its own sake, and who never sacrificed truth for base or worldly ends, he works now, with even greater mastery of his art, and in the spirit of a deeply religious man,—the reward of his fidelity. Because, as St. Paul said of himself, so may it be said of Bourget; he was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, but followed the Light always, whithersoever it led him, until now he sees the many ways of life as God's ways for man's redemption.

From the beginning he saw that "the wages of sin is death." There was always a suggestion of moral purpose in his stories. His *Deux petites Filles,* with its tragic tale of Simone, written in 1888, concludes: "I have been thinking that it is a serious matter to have sons and daughters, and that many people take it, this very serious matter, very lightly." In his *Monsieur Legrimaudet* (1889-1891), he remarks: "It has seemed to me often that the highest morality of a work of art, by which I mean a work of literature, consists in redoubling in us the sense of

mystery, hidden in the depths of every human being, alike in the most wretched and in the most comic, as in the most sublime."

We gather from his writings that at one time he was a sceptic, if not an atheist, but that later, "after years of struggle," he recovered, through "the dry analyses of science," faith in the Unknowable, which made it possible for him once more to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven." For how long this stage lasted, we do not know. The turning point seems to have come with his writing of *Le Disciple*. In any case, to-day, Bourget is a devout Catholic, but broad-minded, mellow, Gallican. As we have said,—fidelity to the truth which he saw, although a limited truth, enabled the great Lover of Truth to lead him to a breadth and depth of vision, which although still limited, none the less gives power to serve such as perhaps no other publicist in France possesses. If he were to know more, we doubt if he could accomplish as much: and because now his desire to serve, quite obviously, is even greater than his desire to know (which is just as it ought to be), Bourget is reaping the reward which his own soul would have chosen.

Un Drame dans le monde is the story of a crime, followed by a great repentance; of a betrayal, followed by a complete forgiveness. Neither the man nor the woman had any faith. But the frightful facts of their existence compelled them to think, and after their agony, they found peace,—in the determination of one to atone, and of the other to work with and for that atonement. There are actions, said the woman, which, once committed, leave you without any age, without hope, without expectation. And the man, though without faith, echoed his childhood, and spoke of "buying back," of "making good"—of expiation. The woman grasped at the straw, and found the full meaning of words which he had used emptily. "Christ means redemption," she discovered. And through her need, the man found salvation also.

It is nothing, as we tell it. But Bourget's art is marvellous,—the more perfect, we think, now that his motive illumines it from within. He gives life, and vivid life, to every character he draws, to every incident he describes. He has humour, beauty of diction, rare simplicity of style, profound insight. His sense of perspective, of proportion, is Gothic. Each story is complete, no matter how brief. And yet, like all true art, his art creates more than a living form, more than colour and movement: it creates atmosphere. Not one word of this is suggested, but the atmosphere of *Un Drame dans le monde* says quite clearly: "Yes, that woman sinned, and knew it; and because she knew it, her sin became the mainspring of her life and effort. She flew, while you crawl. Are *you* without sin? Are you without the opportunity which sin gives? Have you no need, no occasion, 'to buy back,' 'to make good,'—to expiate? See your past as it really was, see yourself as you really are,—and you too might fly!"

We are among those who love France. It is our privilege, therefore, to express gratitude when an author represents so truly and so consistently, the nobility, the insight, and the charm, of the French genius.

Still,—we are not satisfied. We want more!

Novels are used by most people "to kill time," or to distract their minds from the worries or boredom of daily routine. In the latter case, novels are used as a "harmless" substitute for alcohol or drugs. But they can and should be used primarily to help us to understand ourselves and to help us to understand the Divine, or, rather, the action of the divine will in human affairs. And because it is of vital importance that we should see into the depths of our own lower natures, down to desires and tendencies which perhaps have not as yet emerged, we can gain much from the patho-psychology of such books as *Le Disciple,* and even from *André Cornélis,*—on condition that we approach them in the right spirit and for the right purpose. As a general rule, however, we believe it is far wiser and better to do as Paul the Apostle urged us to do (and M. Bourget, we are sure, would agree that Paul was a greater psychologist than

any modern), namely,—"whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Therefore we hope to read some day, in the form of a novel, the constructive, the positive side of Bourget's philosophy. He will be able to do that supremely difficult thing,—portray his own ideal. He has described the *Inferno;* he has described the *Purgatorio;* he has not described the *Paradiso.* And we ask that of him: his greatest and noblest achievement, to be written, we fear, "for the few", but to be cherished by them, for many generations, as an inspiration and a delight. Z.

Death and its Mystery: Before Death, by Camille Flammarion, translated by E. S. Brooks; The Century Co., New York, 1921.

An idea of the scope of this book may be gained from the titles of Chapters: Materialism—an erroneous, incomplete, and insufficient Doctrine. What is man? Does the soul exist? Supra-normal faculties of the soul, unknown or little understood. The will, acting without the spoken word, without a sign, and at a distance. Telepathy and psychic transmissions at a distance. Vision without eyes—the spirit's vision, exclusive of telepathic transmissions. The sight of future events. Knowledge of the future.

The most interesting thing about this book, it appears to the reviewer, is the presence in it of two contrasted elements, broadly corresponding to what we mean by the words psychical and spiritual. Flammarion sets himself to solve the problem of death, the problem of "the Great Beyond," by marshalling the evidence for the existence of the possible survivor, from facts recorded before death; that is, in our present experience. He brings together many well attested facts to show that this possible survivor, whom he calls the Soul, does exist; that it has supranormal faculties of action and of perception; that the will can act at a distance; that there is vision without eyes, and hearing independent of the ears; and, perhaps the most interesting section, because of the philosophical problems it raises, that there is definite prevision of future events, which may or may not be dramatic and significant.

All this, of course, covers ground with which students of Theosophy have been familiar for years; in their view, it proves the existence, not of the Soul, but rather of the astral or psychic body, and its range of psychical powers of perception and of action. It is of real value to have this evidence so well and lucidly brought together; and, it will probably be agreed, this method of gathering evidence from living people is far sounder, far less objectionable, than much of the modern necromancy so fashionable just now.

But all this is limited to the psychical world. Where are we to find the contrasted element, the spiritual, in this book? The answer is: in the great personality of Flammarion himself. It is really, although its distinguished author was probably quite unconscious of this, a deeply interesting chapter of autobiography, the revelation of a valiant and loyal soul, inflexibly honest, full of aspiration, in which power is balanced by humility and inspired by compassion for the sorrows of men.

The picture of Flammarion toiling, in the midst of his work among the stars, to lift the pall of blackness from human life, to lessen the sorrow of the bereaved, to lay firmer foundations for faith, seems to us far better evidence for the existence of the soul, and for its immortality, than all the supranormal powers and faculties recorded, even though this record be cogent and convincing. C. J.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION No. 258.—*I am trying to think out a problem. I have all the facts, but my combination of them produces no solution. Exhausted, it may be, my mind does not work upon the problem longer. It does not seem to work at all. I do not seem to be thinking at all. After a while the solution comes to me. The mind seems to have worked it out by no will of mine. Sometimes days will elapse, and I have thought of many things foreign to the subject, when suddenly the solution comes to me. How does Theosophy explain?*

ANSWER.—It is one of the fundamental principles of The Theosophical Society and of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY that no one can claim that his particular belief is "Theosophy," or that his explanation is the "Theosophical explanation" of any question. Each one can give only his own belief, or quote from the writings of older and wiser students of Theosophy which in his opinion are applicable to the matter under discussion. Others are always free to agree or to disagree with what is quoted, irrespective of its source. From my reading of theosophical literature, and from my own experience, I am convinced that we are conscious of only a very small part of our real selves, and that a great deal goes on inside us of which we are not conscious at all or of which we only see the results. Few people are conscious of their real motives, or of the extent to which they are influenced by vanity and other forms of self-love. The consciousness of the average man is said to be centered in Kama-Manas, in which centre he may be quite unconscious of his real Self, the higher Triad, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, the "Re-incarnating Ego". This real Self is constantly trying to guide and help the personality. It may be that the solution of the problem comes from this Self, or it may come from some one of the many other parts of ourselves which have a consciousness of their own, some higher and some lower than the level of our personal consciousness. If it be a problem in which the soul is interested, it may be that the answer is brought through from sleep. Mr. Johnston, in his *Song of Life,* speaks most illuminatingly of the fact that during deep sleep the consciousness of all men rises to the spiritual plane and bathes in that ocean of immortal power and peace, but we are robbed of all memory of this by the army of shadows, our own fears and desires, that meet us on the threshold of waking. One purpose of purification is to enable us to bring through to waking consciousness more of what our souls learn in sleep. M.

ANSWER.—Experience would say growth is the law of all real things. Gardening is an example. The gardener exhausts himself digging and pulverizing the soil. Then he puts in the seed, and *leaves it.* After a few days the miracle has taken place. The same process governs the production of any work of art. It would seem true of moral problems also. C.

ANSWER.—Theosophy helps us to answer such a question, or in any case to obtain some light on it, because one of the principles of Theosophy is the universality of law. "Man is the mirror of the universe." Physical laws are the

reflection of spiritual laws. The processes of physical digestion correspond to the processes of mental digestion. The will and the emotions in both cases play an important part. "Thinking about something,"—as many people use that expression—corresponds to mastication. Thorough mastication we know to be essential to good digestion and assimilation, but we know also that it is only a preliminary step in a series of steps. "Thinking," in that limited sense, means analysis, or the separation of a problem into its parts.

Intellectually, however, comparatively few are capable of mental mastication. They reject anything which is not in liquid form. They have not outgrown a milk diet. It is impossible, therefore, to generalize. We should have to know, first, *the age* of the person concerned. T.

QUESTION No. 259.—*Each one of us has put a definite amount of time and of force into building up the faults of his lower nature. Must there be a corresponding amount of time and of force expended in the effort to overcome them, before these faults can be eradicated?*

ANSWER.—Have you ever watched a building in process of construction? How slowly it rises. Each brick, stone and beam must be so carefully placed, by hand, one at a time. Have you ever watched a demolition? How quickly it moves. Plaster, lathes, and brick, a whole section that required half a day to erect, falls after a few solid blows. C.

ANSWER.—It would certainly seem that there must be a relation between the amount of time and force expended in building up, and that required for the destruction of our faults, but this does not mean that the same amount of time and force is required. There are many different kinds of force (and no doubt of time also, if our minds were capable of recognizing them). That we have spent ten years or ten incarnations in building up a fault, does not mean that it will take the same number of years or incarnations to eradicate it. Perhaps it would, if we had only the same lower force of our own self-will to draw upon to destroy it, that we used to create it. Nature takes a million years to form a rock and another million to wear it away, but the application of a different type of force (dynamite, for instance) may pulverize it in a moment. So we have often been told that of ourselves we cannot conquer our faults, but that the help of our Master and of his force is essential.

J. F. B. M.

QUESTION No. 260.—*How can we best strengthen the will?*

ANSWER.—By exercising it. It is to that end that so many of the self-denying acts are directed. The things banned may be quite innocent of themselves. But by prohibiting them, the inertia of the will is checked. It is given something to think about, something upon which to make an effort. Through effort, it grows. C.

ANSWER.—One knows well how to strengthen a muscle—by exercising that muscle, or group of muscles. One has a purpose in so doing.

The growing child is taught and disciplined to exercise a faculty by various mental processes. The object in view is the gaining of personal power, and the gain is in the personal will.

But the strengthening of the real spiritual will depends on the performance of deliberate acts of discipline in the faith and full conviction that, though they may deny the personal self, such acts will add to the power of the united spirit of life which is man's only true Self. A. K.

ANSWER.—1. Through greater love, and more constant and concentrated prayer and communion.

2. Then, self-surrender becomes more complete. Our will is to do the divine will; it is no longer "our" will, but is swung over to the side of God.

3. Finally, by work, by using the will. We pray "Thy will be done," that the Father may be glorified. We have been told "Herein is the Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." By work, therefore, the outward expression of our inner desire or motive, that inner motive is in turn itself strengthened. C. R. A.

QUESTION No. 261.—*I have heard it said that each time a desired object or pleasure is given up, an inner growth takes place: is this so?*

ANSWER.—All depends on motive. If a man makes a sacrifice of pleasure in order to obtain inner growth, such growth would be at least stunted. The gift or sacrifice would be made under conditions which would have self as their basis. But when such self sacrifice is a free gift, unselfishly laid on the altar of the heart in devotion to the Master, all such offerings must surely be attended by inner growth. K.

ANSWER.—It must depend upon the motive. If the sacrifice is made for another, for the Masters' work, that the Divine will should be accomplished, yes,—even if the sacrifice is actually mistaken, unwise, in the light of higher seeing. But if the sacrifice is made for one's personal growth in grace, if it is a mere subtilty of self-indulgence, in that we take more pleasure in the thought of what we have been able to give up than in anything else, the growth is of a different sort, the progress is along the left-hand path. A.

QUESTION No. 262.—*What is the true basis of tolerance?*

ANSWER.—The true basis must be in the expression of Universal Brotherhood, the relation of all souls with the Over-Soul. A. K.

ANSWER.—Tolerance should not be confused with indifference. Too often it is so confused. Humility and aspiration would seem its foundation. One perceives a ray of light and truth. A proud man thinks he has gained it, has gained it all, and will gain for himself any small portion of it not yet won. A humble man feels that only a beginning has been made. He thirsts for more of this precious truth. And he seeks it everywhere,—from all men. C. C. C.

ANSWER.—Love—for if we truly have that, we shall be able to see, in what may seem like a hasty or ill-considered expression of thought or opinion on the part of another, the real needs of that individual, his weaknesses, his potentialities. Tolerance is not a rigid, polite imperviousness to anything with which we do not agree; it is the quality of sympathetic understanding based on a desire to help, which can come only from the heart. R.

QUESTION No. 263.—*What is the attitude of Theosophy towards asceticism?*

ANSWER.—Theosophy as such can have no attitude towards anything and the writer assuredly can make no claim to speak on its behalf. But a thing is either true or false, and the results of an action vary with the motive which prompts it. Asceticism is thus true or false, useful or mischievous according to the purpose which prompts it. A rigid rule of self-denial and self-sacrifice which leads to the mastery and conquest of self and its conversion to other uses, has a purpose of very wide application. Asceticism for its own sake is mischievous because it thus becomes a travesty of something valuable. A. K.

ANSWER.—There is true asceticism and false. The aim of true asceticism is to bring the will and higher faculties to function. Self denial and other ascetic practices are to that end—to awaken those dormant and higher faculties. C. C. C.

ANSWER.—What is asceticism? It must vary as individuals vary, in accordance with the circumstances and surroundings of their lives, depending upon the complexities of their inner and outer duties. It may be right for one man to become a contemplative, take a vow of silence, embrace holy poverty, undertake all kinds of austerities. It may be frightfully wrong for another, no matter how much he may wish it, to do this; placed in the world, with definite duties and responsibilities, he must play the game, keeping wealth as a trust imposed upon him instead of giving it away, bringing the light in what measure he is able, to those with whom he comes in contact in the crowded ways of life. All this may mean something infinitely harder; the renunciation, the sacrifice may be much more complete than in the case of the contemplative. So, too, the inner rule by which such a man must live in the midst of outer activities, may contain immeasurably more of real asceticism than the rule of the contemplative.

What is one man's meat may be another man's poison. Theosophy requires each to define asceticism for himself, in the light of the position in life in which Karma has placed him, his duties and responsibilities, his real inner vision.

R.

QUESTION No. 264.—*Are the so-called moral laws natural or divine?*

ANSWER.—Infraction of the moral laws incurs, automatically, penalties on the external and physical plane; in that sense they are natural. But all such natural laws are the outward expression, on the physical plane, of the Divine law which governs the universe, of spiritual cause and effect, of the working out of good or evil. A.

ANSWER.—So far as such "moral" laws are the expression in ordinary life of some of the laws of the soul, they are natural *and* divine. But some of such "moral" laws have their origin in association of animals and in self-protection: some are impositions of stronger individuals on weaker neighbors. But the moral law which is the basis of protection of the weak against the strong, the law which acts in restraint of selfishness in any form, that law is divine in its origin, though the selfishness to which mankind has given way, now renders it unnatural.

A. K.

ANSWER.—Is a sunset less of a divine thing because man has discovered something of its beauty? Are not Prudence, Temperance, Courage, and Justice qualities divinely placed in the order of life to be discovered by man in his process of experimentation? He discovers, through suffering, that gluttony brings unhappiness—so he comes to prize temperance. Perhaps in a similar way, higher virtues will become entirely natural, after one has been lifted to their plane, through the interposition of an Avatar. X.

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Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

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"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

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